THREE TRAVELLERS TO INDIA

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TO INDIA ;

Being a simple account of India as seen by Yuan Chwang (Hiuen Tsiang), Ibn Batuta, and Bernier ;

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INTRODUCTION.

Every one loves a traveller's narrative. If he tells it in person, the fascination of his personality adds to the interest of his tale. His hearers love to gather round him, and eagerly listen to his adventures. They are carried to scenes which they have not witnessed, and enabled to share in the thrill of exploits which they have not performed.

If the traveller is known to them, his own history helps to interpret his story. His voice, his gestures, his temperament—all help to enhance the artistic effect of what he has to tell. If he exaggerates a little, the knowing ones smile and forgive him. But the more ignorant and credulous remember and applaud him chiefly for his exaggerations.

If there is a mystery about the personality of the traveller, the narrative throws side-lights on what he is, whence he came, how and why he travelled, and what stores of hidden lore he keeps in reserve. Curiosity is always a strong factor in men's search of knowledge, and there is nothing like a mystery or a half-mystery to stir the imagination and stimulate the desire to read out of the narrative into the mind of the narrator.

Travellers of by-gone ages have an additional claim to our attention. Distance in time has its charm like distance in place. We love to hear of our country as they saw it. There are periods of

PREFACE.

Very little travel literature has been hitherto available in a convenient form for the young Indian student. There are many difficulties in preparing it in a suitable form for youths on the threshold of their University career The texts of old travellers—especially Chinese and Arab—are often in a very unsatisfactory state. There is no agreement as to the meaning of much of what they say or the identification of many of the places which they name. The contents and " atmosphere " are also old-world and archaic.

How far these difficulties have been surmounted in the following pages, it is for others to judge. The discerning reader who is able to go back to the original sources will notice the great amount of spade-work involved in preparing a simple narrative not too dry and not too superficial. The writer believes that there is no form of reading more calculated to stir the imagination and awaken the powers of observation of young students than a mixture of travel. history, geography, and moral reflections. He has therefore asked the three greatest travellers to India, of pre-British days, to tell their own tales and unfold their own views of our wonderful country.

our history which are obscure. We want light thrown on them. It is of much interest to us to know what impressions the travellers formed. If we also know a little about them, the countries from which they came, the background of their knowledge, and what they came to seek, we shall have their point of view. We shall then be able to appreciate their account intelligently, and enjoy their thoughts while we increase our own knowledge.

I am going to tell you briefly the stories of three travellers who came to India at different periods. One was a Chinese Master of the Law of the seventh century of the Christian era; the second was an Arab from Morocco in the fourteenth century; and the third was a philosopher from France in the brilliant epoch of Louis XIV in the seventeenth century. We shall thus get pictures of India at three different periods, which we can put into their places in our study of Indian history.

We shall be in a different atmosphere in the company of each of these travellers. The India which they each saw was not the same. The mental equipment with which they came was different in each case. Our country is a magnet which drew them for different reasons. In race and nationality, religion and mental outlook they were all different. We must make allowances for all these factors. In doing so we shall learn not only of the history of our own country but of its relations with the rest of the world.

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THE BUDDHIST PILGRIM.

YUAN CHWANG.

(*In India* 630—644).

In the chequered history of foreign Buddhism there is no character that makes a stronger appeal to India than Yuan Chwang.* The account of his travels has become a classic in the Chinese language, and he has himself become almost a legendary hero in many monasteries in and around China. His narrative, apart from its religious interest, is valuable in revealing to us India as she was thirteen centuries ago.

How can we picture to ourselves the Chinese attitude towards religion ? From the earliest times there had grown up in China a body of beliefs, customs, rites, and ceremonies, which form the foundation of Taoism. This may be called the popular religion,—the religion of the wayside. Then came Confucious the philosopher. But his philosophy held no mysteries, and asked for no asceticism. It was a practical code of individual and social virtue.

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*The French spelling is Hiouen Thsang. Some English authorities have called him Hiuen Tsiang, and others Hsüan Chang. It is not a personal name but a title ; and is written in two different ways in Chinese characters. Our version follows that of Professor F. W. Rhys Davids, as being the nearest representative of the sound in the modern Pekingkese dialect.

It taught veneration for the past, duties to ancestors, and courtesy and gentleness in every-day life. It was eminently suited to the Chinese mind and was held in high favour by the governing and cultured classes. But it lacked enthusiasm and the emotional appeal, which came to be supplied by Buddhism. These three religions, Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism lived and flourished side by side in China. They were not even considered to be inconsistent with one another. People adopted any of them according to the bent of their minds, and many among the Chinese vaguely professed two of them, or all of them together.

Buddhism came to China about the first century of the Christian era. But it had undergone many changes in the course of its migration from India. It was sometimes persecuted in China and sometimes held in special favour by the State. Its original simple teaching had been overlaid with many fantastic stories and ceremonials. Many sects had arisen, which disputed about difficult points of doctrine. For the decision of such controversies a reference to the original Indian sources was necessary. A stream of Chinese Buddhist pilgrims had poured into India during the six centuries preceding the age of Yuan Chwang, and a few Indian Buddhists had taught in China. But the Chinese translations of the Buddhist scriptures were still unsatisfactory, and we can understand the desire of Chinese scholars to get access to the original writings and produce accurate translations and commentaries.

Yuan Chwang was born in 600 A. D., of parents who were devoted Confucianists. He was taught all the classics of Confucianism—the favourite creed of the higher classes. But Buddhism also held an honoured place in Chinese life. An elder brother of his had become a Buddhist, and his influence as well as the personality of Buddha attracted Yuang Chwang. He became a Buddhist monk, and travelled at a young age through the Buddhist monasteries of his country, seeking instruction and becoming steeped in all the Buddhist learning that was available in China. His eager soul however longed to perfect his knowledge in Buddha's own land of birth, and to understand the philosophy of Buddhism in the original Pali and Sanskrit tongues. Not only did he wish to obtain such knowledge himself, but with the true instinct of a scholar, he wished to make such knowledge accessible to his own countrymen by bringing home Indian manuscripts or accurate copies made from them.

There were other reasons why a pious Buddhist's soul turned to India. Relics of Buddha were very highly prized, and India and the frontier countries on the land route to India had many relics enshrined in Stupas erected for the purpose. India was studded with such Stupas, and personal relics of Buddha—real, or assumed by the pious imagination of devout believers—were extraordinarily numerous. To gaze on them or on the shrines which guarded them was in itself an act of deep merit,

but to obtain some relic of Buddha to carry away with reverent care was a piece of good fortune enough to awaken religious ecstasy. To visit the numerous places associated with some act of Buddha—in his real life or in the numerous previous lives or re-births whose stories filled enormous volumes of Mahayana literature—was also a factor in the Buddhist's growth of spiritual life. Further, to associate with the Buddhist communities in their numerous establishments, to learn, teach, and preach in their languages, and to hold communion with the choicer spirits of Buddhism,—these were also essential factors in Buddhistic spiritual education.

With these objects and these only, did Yuan Chwang turn Pilgrim at the age of 29. and start on his distant westward tramp, which was to keep him away from his country for nearly sixteen years. His main object was religious, but he was a refined scholar, and he noted geographical and other details which are useful to us in re-constructing the history of our own country.

His journey started and finished at the ancient town now called Sing-an-fu or Si-an, the capital of the Province of Shen-si. This was the eastern terminus for the famous mediæval trade routes through Central Asia. There was an Imperial rescript forbidding the crossing of the frontier; so he could take no companions with him. The route was full of dangers: waterless deserts, cold wind-swept plains, high mountains, deep rivers, forbidding

gorges, robbers and unfriendly strangers. But the Pilgrim prayed, and was encouraged by omens to go forward. On the way he met a young foreigner with a bay horse, thin and skinny, and a hard varnished saddle, bound in front with iron. Such a horse had been described to him by a soothsayer; in finding him the Pilgrim felt confident that the hidden powers were aiding him. He exchanged the animal with his own which was worth a good deal more.

He had to go west for India. But due west lay the high Tibetan plateau, and the mountains that form its northern bulwarks. Therefore he took a north-westerly course touching the extension of the Great Chinese Wall into Central Asia. While yet some days' journey east of the Lob Nor region, about a thousand miles from his starting point, he had to pass through a dreary desert, which is thus described by his Chinese biographer:—

"As he looked in the four directions, the view was boundless. There were no traces either of man or horse, and in the night the demons and goblins raised fire-lights as many as the stars; in the day-time the driving wind blew the sand before it as in the season of rain. His heart was unaffected by fear; but he suffered from want of water, and was so parched with thirst that he could no longer go forward. Thus for four nights and five days not a drop of water had he to wet his throat or mouth; his stomach was racked with a burning heat, and he was exhausted. He prayed, he slept, he dreamed." But he persevered until he came to water, from which he drank and replenished his

leather bottle. His horse was also glad of some grass on which he could feed.

This description is not at all an exaggeration, except perhaps in the statement that he lived without a drop of water for five days. But it is not the Pilgrim but the biographer who is responsible for this detail. From the Pilgrim's own record personal details are studiously excluded. He is modest, and is interested only in things religious. He no doubt left many personal notes, which his biographer used, in some cases misunderstanding them, or mixing up details.

After this the Pilgrim's luck turned. Fame had preceded him. On the way he met Chinese Buddhist priests in temples. Foreign kings and foreign priests delighted to honour him. What he valued most, however, was the opportunity of preaching and teaching, and expounding the Law. At Kau Chang (near modern Turfan), the capital of the Uighur country, he had a remarkable experience of which his biographer gives a long and graphic account. The Uighurs are an interesting and ancient tribe of Eastern Turks. The king of Kau-Chang sent an imposing escort composed of his officers and chief ministers to meet the Pilgrim when he was yet many miles from the royal city. For rapid marching, relays of horses were laid for him, and a special batch of selected horses was placed at the Pilgrim's disposal. The lean bay horse, which had brought him through the desert, and which perhaps stood the desert better than a more highly

bred horse would have done, was left behind, to follow, and we hear no more of him.

When the Pilgrim entered the city at night, he was met by the King himself at the head of a great retinue, bearing lighted torches. He conducted the Pilgrim to a magnificent canopy, and said: "From the time that I knew of your honour's coming my happiness has prevented me from sleeping or eating............I was sure you would arrive to-night, and therefore my wife and children with myself have taken no sleep, but reading the Sacred Books, have awaited your arrival with respect." The Queen and her retinue came soon after to present their respects.

The king, who had travelled in China, showed great respect and affection for the Pilgrim, and wished to keep him altogether in his kingdom. "My realm" he said "has no teacher and guide. I would therefore detain the Master of the Law, in order that he may convert the ignorant and the foolish." The Pilgrim thanked him, but asked to be excused, as he must carry out his purpose of visiting the land of Buddha. The king threatened to keep him by force, and the Pilgrim went on a hunger-strike for three days. At last the king yielded. The Pilgrim stayed for a month, during which religious conferences were held, and he was literally worshipped with incense. Considering that the western regions were cold, the king had various articles of warm clothing made for him, such as face coverings, gloves, and leather

boots. The king made him a present of a hundred ounces of gold, thirty thousand pieces of silver, and five hundred rolls of satin and taffeta, enough for the Pilgrim's outward and return journey even if it lasted twenty years! Thirty horses and twenty-four servants were included in the personal gifts. To facilitate the Pilgrim's journey, presents and credentials on scrolls of satin were given him for the rulers of twenty-four neighbouring States.

The Pilgrim felt overpowered with these attentions, but they did not turn his head. The parting speech which he is supposed to have made is full of dignity and of an earnest religious spirit. "The time of the Holy One" he said "is remote from us. And so the sense of his doctrine is differently expounded by different teachers. But as the taste of the fruit of different trees of the same kind is the same, so the principles of the schools as they now exist are not different ....After questioning the different masters and receiving from their mouths the explanation of the true doctrine, I shall return to my country and there translate the books I have obtained........I shall unravel the tangle of error and destroy the misleading influences of false teaching. I shall repair the deficiencies of the bequeathed doctrine of Buddha ....Perchance by these meritorious works I may in some degree repay your large beneficence. But considering the greatness of the task before me, I can delay no further. To-morrow I must take leave of Your Majesty, and this causes me much

pain. I can only, in consideration of Your Majesty's goodness, offer the tribute of my sincere gratitude."

He was now skirting the hilly Turkish country north of the Tarim Basin. There were scattered many Buddhist Sanghārāmas (monasteries). A few Deva (*i. e.*, non-Buddhist) Temples were also found. Tall statues of Buddha (some as high as 90 ft.) were to be seen, and car processions were held periodically. The Indian alphabets in some form or other were in evidence, and the dominant religious influence was Indian Buddhist, of different schools. The Pilgrim crossed the Tsung Ling mountains by a high pass in the Ice Mountain, which he thus describes :—

"The gorges of the mountain accumulated snow and retained their coldness spring and summer. Although there was the periodical melting, the freezing set in immediately. The path was dangerous, and cold winds blew fiercely. There were many troubles from savage dragons who molested travellers. Those going by this road could not wear red clothes or carry calabashes or make a loud noise. A slight provocation caused immediate disaster. Fierce winds burst forth, and there were flying sands and showers of stones. Those who encountered these died."

We may see how the relentless working of the forces of nature gave rise to superstitious terrors.

The watershed was now past, and the Pilgrim was in the region of the Jaxartes and the Oxus. At the Ice Mountain he had already traversed over

2,000 miles. At the Thousand Springs he came to a beautifully watered country, with fine shady trees, spring flowers, and tame deer with bells and rings. It was the summer resort of the Khan of the Turks, who, according to the Pilgrim's biographer, was a fire worshipper and kept a splendid court. His tents were embroidered with gold. He treated the Pilgrim with great distinction, and tried to dissuade him from going to India. The country, he thought, was hot, and the people rude. The Khan's Court was fond of drinking and music. He sent away the Pilgrim with presents. He passed on to the south-west, crossed the Jaxartes, and soon arrived at Samarkand.

Already at that time Samarkand was a great centre of trade. The country was very fertile, abounding in trees and flowers. Its inhabitants were skilful craftsmen, clever and energetic. Its social institutions were models for neighbouring States. Its soldiers were renowned for their valour. They looked on death as a return to their kindred, and no foe could stand against them in battle. Bokhara is mentioned, but it is doubtful if the Pilgrim went there personally. He was still in hilly country. To the north and east were the plains (partly desert) watered by the Jaxartes and the Oxus. He had yet to pierce through the great mountain mass that separates the Oxus from India

He had now completed over 3,000 miles. His first step in the new direction was taken at the Iron Gate, where his course turned from south-west to

south-east. The Iron Gate is a famous ravine about 3,700 feet above the sea level, and about 160 miles south-west of Samarkand. It is a narrow and risky track, from 5 to 36 paces wide, between high precipitous mountains. The rocks on either side are of an iron colour, and in the Pilgrim's time there was also a folding iron gate, which made the position impregnable. He had now to leave the Pamir mountains on the left and cross the Hindu Kush (" Black Ridge " Mountains) on the south. He crossed the Oxus and got to Kunduz in the north-eastern corner of modern Afghanistan. Here his biographer mentions the Pilgrim's first contact with a Brahman priest reciting incantations.

From this point we may consider the country as India's border-land in the Pilgrim's eyes. From the Kabul valley (Laghmān) he considered it as the beginning of Northern India. Physically this is correct, as the rivers south of the Hindu Kush feed the Indus.

From Kunduz he made a few miles detour west to Balkh, where he saw the washing basin of Buddha. " So bright and dazzling was the blending of colours in this basin that one could not well tell whether it was of stone or metal. There was also a tooth of the Buddha an inch long and eight-tenths of an inch broad, and there was his broom made of *Kāsa* grass, above two feet long and about seven inches round, the handle being set with pearls. On the six festival days these relics were exhibited to the assembled lay and clerical worshippers. On such occasions the

relics, moved by the 'thorough sincerity of a worshipper, may emit a brilliant light." There were 100 Buddhist monasteries, with more than 3,000 Brethren, all adherents of the Little Vehicle.

At Bamiyan he saw a figure of a sleeping Buddha, about 1,000 ft. long. The length seems incredible, but it is mentioned both by the Pilgrim and his biographer. Crossing the Hindu Kush he came into the Kabul valley, where he found a ruler of the Kshatriya caste. This region was associated with Kanishka, about whom fabulous legends are retailed by the Pilgrim. Kanishka was the Kusāna king, patron of Mahayana Buddhism, who became supreme in Northern India about 78 A. D. In the Pilgrim's time (about 630) there were about a hundred Buddhist foundations, numerous relics, and much treasure. Within 35 years (about 664-5) another Chinese pilgrim found this region in the hands of the Arabs, in their onward march through Central Asia.

We need not linger over the Pilgrim's wanderings through the valleys of the Kabul river and its tributaries. Presumably he entered India proper through the Khaibar Pass, though he does not mention it. When he reached the famous Gandhāra country, with its capital at Peshawar, he found the towns and villages desolate. But the Peshawar valley was, as it still is, rich in crops, fruits, and flowers. It had much sugarcane, and produced sugar-candy (called by him in Chinese "stone-honey"). This was a novelty to the Chinese, who did not yet

know that sugar was produced from sugarcane. The climate was warm, with scarcely any frost or snow. The people were neither strong nor warlike; they were fond of the practical arts. There were only a few Buddhists; most of the people followed other religions.

From Peshawar he seems to have gone north to the hill country again, where he noticed the birth-place of Panini, the master grammarian of India, who lived perhaps a thousand years before him. The Pilgrim must have enquired curiously about the legends relating to him. Panini appeared, says he, when the span of a man's life was a century. Endowed by nature with great gifts, he further improved them by deep study. It grieved him to find in human speech a mass of irregular and illogical forms. He wanted to reduce them to order by a process of selection and exclusion. While meditating on his great task, he met the god Shiva, who approved of his plan and promised help. Thus was the Rishi able to work out his comprehensive scheme of grammar and vocabulary—a monument of Indian genius for all time.

Coming down to the plains, he visited Takshasila (Taxila), then a dependency of Kashmir, on whose antiquities the recent labours of the Archæological Department have thrown so much light. The country was prosperous and well-watered, and the climate was genial. The Pilgrim found it in a state of civil war, and the numerous Buddhist monasteries desolate.

Proceeding to Kashmir, he was received with great pomp and ceremony by both the king and the people. A royal elephant was placed at his disposal, and he was lodged in the palace. He was invited to read and expound the Buddhist scriptures. Twenty clerks were given to him to copy out the manuscripts. The Pilgrim spent two years in these delightful surroundings, collecting texts and visiting Buddhist shrines. Among the products of the country he mentions horses, saffron, rock-crystal lenses ("fire pearls"),* and medicinal plants. The people, he thought, were handsome but deceitful. They were fond of learning, but their faith embraced both orthodoxy and heterodoxy. In Poonch he saw the mango, the fig, and the plantain.

Returning to the plains, the Pilgrim seems to have passed through Sialkot and Jalandhar. Before reaching Sialkot he had to pass through a forest, in which he was robbed of all his clothes and goods. He took the incident very cheerfully, and the villagers more than made up his losses with gifts. Sialkot was then the capital of a large kingdom. From Sialkot he went to a place which he calls China-puh-ti, which we cannot identify with certainty. Before going on to Jalandhar he stayed here 14 months, to study with a renowned priest.

Of the Jalandharis, in spite of their Buddhism, he had no great opinion. "The people" he says

* Probably used to ignite fire, before matches were invented.

"had truculent ways and a mean and contemptible appearance, but they were in affluent circumstances." From here he again struck north to the Himalayas, visiting the Kulu valley. On his way south he passed through a place ruled over by a king of the Vaishya caste. He seems to have passed through Thanesar, the capital of a district of "religious merit." In connection with this place he gives a reminiscence of the great war of the Mahabharat, although neither the epic nor its philosophy appealed to him.

Of the Jamna he says little, but the Ganges impressed him. "Its waters," he notes, "have a pleasant taste, and a fine sand comes down with the current. In popular literature the river is called ....the *water of religious merit.* Accumulated sins are effaced by a bath in the river." As a Buddhist he rejected such beliefs, though he accepted purely Buddhist legends without question. He seems again to have struck north into the Himalayas, and after zigzag wanderings made his way to Kanauj. The continent of India was at this time broken up into innumerable kingdoms: between Peshawar and Kanauj alone he counted no less than twenty-three.

At Kanauj the reigning king was a very interesting personality, whom, as we shall see, he met later. This was the famous Harsha, whose full name was Harsha Vardhana, and title Siladitya. The rise of his family and the early part of his romantic history are

told in rhetorical language by the Sanskrit writer Bana Bhatta. The picture of Harsha's character drawn by Bana agrees in the main with that given by the Chinese Pilgrim, if we make allowances for their different points of view. Harsha was a successful warrior, a great and well-informed traveller, a good judge of letters and music, and a man of large views in religion. The Pilgrim looked upon him as a Buddhist. He had in fact a universal mind, and his power and influence extended over the whole of Northern India.

On his way to Prayag by river he converted some pirates who wanted to rob him. They were votaries of Durga, and offered every year a human sacrifice. The Pilgrim, who had a handsome and well-fed appearance, was immediately singled out as a most desirable victim. Every preparation was made for his slaughter. But a storm arose, and the robbers were frightened as well as impressed by his calm behaviour. The Pilgrim took this opportunity of preaching to them, and they were very penitent.

Prayag (modern Allahabad) appealed to him as a city of learning, though it contained very few Buddhists. Here he saw a great wide-spreading tree, which was probably the banyan tree, of which a stump is still shown in the Allahabad Fort. At the junction of the Jamna and the Ganges, he witnessed scenes of great austerity as well as of religious charity on a lavish scale.

The Pilgrim then made his way to that tract (in what is now the Nepal border), which is associated with Buddha's birth and the many legends connected with his home-land. The old cities and monuments were in ruins even then, but he faithfully recorded the legends as he heard them. At the Lumbini Grove, the birth-place of Buddha, he saw "a stone pillar set up by Asoka with the figure of a horse on the top. Afterwards the pillar had been broken in the middle, and laid on the ground [that is, half of it], by a thunderbolt from a malicious dragon." It seems to have been split by lightning. It is one of the romances of archæology that this pillar was found in 1895. It bears an inscription of Asoka, which may be referred to about the year 248 B. C. The Pali letters are clear and in a perfect state of preservation, having lain under the ground for so many centuries. In a beautiful old Pali hymn, the song of Nalaka, the angels announce Buddha's birth :—

> " The wisdom-child,
> That jewel so precious,
> That cannot be matched,
> Has been born at Lumbini,
> In the Sakya land,
> For weal and for joy,
> In the world of men."

East of this tract was wild forest country, dotted about with ruins. It was infested by wild oxen and wild elephants, and robbers and hunters. Tall and straight *Sal* trees are still a feature of that tract

and it was in some such country that Buddha's death was traditionally placed. After duly visiting all the places associated with Buddha's death, the Pilgrim turned south, to the scenes of Buddha's earthly labours.

The Deer Park where Buddha began his teaching is represented by the modern Sarnath (near Benares), where Buddhist remains still exist. Benares he found a wealthy and well-populated city. The people were gentle and courteous. They held in high esteem men devoted to learning, but the majority of them were not Buddhists. The prevailing cult was that of Shiva, who had an image nearly 100 feet high and "life-like in its awe-inspiring majesty." The city he found full of mendicants, some naked, or smeared with ashes, and most of them seeking release from mortal existence through the practice of austerities.

The Pilgrim was now in the midst of a densely populated country in the Ganges valley. The tract between Benares and Gaya was all associated with the earthly mission of Buddha, and he followed every local legend and visited every repository of a relic. But here the Buddhists were not in the majority. The beautiful Tirhut country he found mostly deserted. He describes Nepal as having a cold climate; the people he considered rude and without learning, but skilful mechanics. Nepal was not predominantly Buddhistic, but the kings were Kshatriyas, eminent scholars and believing Buddhists.

He came south again to South Bihār, Magadha, the "middle country", sacred for ever to the Buddhists, because here (at Gaya) Buddha found "enlightenment" The land here was low and moist, abounding in the fragrant rice for which Bihar is still famous. The inhabited sites were on raised ground. The city of Pataliputra (modern Patna) was already so old that it was considered to go back to the ages when "men lived for countless years." There were numerous monasteries and vestiges of Buddha and of the Buddhist king Asoka. The city of Gaya was in hilly country, "strongly situated", but it had only a few inhabitants. Barely four miles to the south was the Bodhi tree, the great Pipal tree under which Buddha had obtained enlightenment. It was surrounded by a stone wall, and loving believers had erected, all round, numerous structures of all kinds to mark their faith in countless traditional miracles.

The culmination of his journey was at Nalanda. This was the famous Buddhist seat of learning a few miles east of Pataliputra. Here there were many well-endowed monasteries grouped together, about 10,000 priests and strangers being resident at any given time. Our Pilgrim found a warm and enthusiastic welcome, and was even told of a dream, which had forewarned the presiding Priest of the coming of their distinguished Chinese guest. He was made free of the monasteries. All the facilities available for his creature comforts or for study and preaching were placed at his disposal. A lay

brother and a Brahman were relieved of religious duties to attend on him, and he had an elephant for riding. He had arrived here after a journey of three years, and he made it his headquarters for his wanderings through India. He studied not only Buddhist lore, but also the learning of the Brahmans—grammar, philosophy, and the Vedas. He also collected many manuscripts and copies of manuscripts.

From here he paid visits to the sacred country all around, and also made a round of eastern, southern, and western India. At Monghyr he paid reverence to the beautiful Buddhist statue made of sandalwood, to which miracles were attributed. He penetrated as far east as the port of Tamralipti, on the Bay of Bengal. He heard of Ceylon where Buddhism flourished, but did not care to take a long sea voyage. Through Orissa and Kalinga he obtained access to the south Kosala country, which may be located near Berar. He turned back south to the Andhra country, and penetrated as far as Kanchi (modern Conjeeveram), where he abandoned the idea of going to Ceylon, as he heard of famine in the island. He now turned to the Deccan Plateau, and made for the west coast, crossing the Narbada near Broach. After visiting Kathiawar and Sindh he seems to have gone to the hill country on the Biloch frontier. He then returned to Nalanda, following a more southern route than the one he had taken on his earlier journey. Possibly it was then that he passed through Mathura on his way from Multan, although Mathura is mentioned earlier in his account.

The Pilgrim had now alternately travelled and studied under many masters for many years, and was anxious to return home. By this time he was himself numbered among the eminent expositors of Buddhist doctrine in Nalanda, and the monks were loth to part with him. Many disciples had gathered round him. While trying to reconcile different systems, he upheld the doctrines of the Great Vehicle. He also wrote books, which further spread his fame, even as far as Assam (Kāmarūpa).

The king of Assam in those days was a Brahman by caste, but well inclined to Buddhism. He invited the Pilgrim to visit his country. He was at first unwilling to go, but when his teacher at Nalanda pointed out what a chance there was in Assam for the spread of the holy doctrine, he decided to accept the invitation. He found the country low and moist but well cultivated and well irrigated. The jack fruit and the cocoanut were the characteristic fruits of the country. The people were short in stature, dark in complexion, and honest in character. Their language was different from that of the "middle country". On the east, Assam communicated through Burma with south-west China, but the rivers, mountains, and wild country in that direction made it impossible as a route for the Pilgrim's return journey.

While the Pilgrim was in Assam, Harsha had come to Bengal, with whose king he was at enmity. Harsha had invited the Pilgrim before, but he had refused the invitation. Hearing that he

was in Assam, he sent to the king of Assam to come himself and bring the Master of the Law with him. The king of Assam replied with spirit, " You can take my head, but not the Master of the Law." Harsha's reply was : "Send the head then, by the bearer of this message." The King of Assam had to give way. Attended by 20,000 elephants and 30,000 river boats (we must allow for some exaggeration), they proceeded up the Ganges and met Harsha. We are told that Harsha was always accompanied on his march by several hundred persons with gold drums, who beat one stroke for every step taken. The Pilgrim was received by Harsha with great courtesy and consideration.

Harsha asked him about China. The Pilgrim made a courtly speech in praise of his own sovereign, of the Tang dynasty, who had restored peace to China and made his influence extend far and wide. Harsha had already heard of the songs in honour of the Chinese Emperor. He now asked about the book which the Pilgrim had written in India in defence and exposition of the doctrines of the Great Vehicle. The Pilgrim presented him with a copy, and the king praised it. The king's widowed sister, whose tragic history we read of in Bana, was present, and joined in the praise of the Master of the Law.

Harsha now ordered a grand religious assemblage at Kanauj, to which kings and men of learning from all the different kingdoms and schools of religious

thought were invited. The monks of Nalanda were included in the invitation, and were naturally delighted to come and witness the religious triumph of their Chinese brother. Harsha took with him the Pilgrim and the king of Assam up the Ganges to Kanauj. There were great processions and banquets in his honour. For eighteen days a challenge was offered to any one to overthrow the Pilgrim's doctrine, but no one was bold enough to take up the challenge, and save the followers of the Little Vehicle from utter confusion. Harsha offered the Pilgrim thousands of pieces of gold and silver, rare jewels, and costly dresses, but he refused them, as inconsistent with his quest of spiritual knowledge.

The Pilgrim now wished to start on his return journey to China, but Harsha delayed him for another great religious assemblage at Prayag. After this he gave him leave to depart, and both Harsha and the king of Assam bade him a tender farewell, and loaded him with presents for the journey. A powerful escort was also provided for him, with letters of commendation for carriages and transport on the way. He carried books, images, and relics. He was enough of a gardener to carry some flower seeds from India. A great elephant formed part of the equipage. In crossing the Indus, they encountered a great storm in which 50 manuscripts and the flower seeds were lost. He tried to replace part of his literary loss by halting on the way to allow for fresh copies to reach him.

His return journey was a much more ceremonious affair than his outward journey had been. He was now travelling in state, and had loads of precious images, relics, and books. Caravans of merchants now sought the protection of his company. After arriving at Kunduz he travelled east instead of north. Skirting the south-east corner of the Pamirs, he had yet to cross the water-shed between east and west. He and his followers were no longer able to ride on horseback. There were irregular sharp-pointed peaks, and the cold was intense. When they reached Kashgar, they were at length in the great Tarim Basin. But they had to avoid the Tarim Desert. The Pilgrim passed along the southern edge of this desert, passing through Yarkand and Khotan. At Khotan he found a great trade centre, and congenial and hospitable company. But he had to wait and collect transport, the great elephant he had brought with him having perished on the way. He had to wait about eight months, but he had no difficulty in having all his wants abundantly supplied.

In the spring of 645 he returned to Sing-an-fu, then the western capital of China. He brought with him ten horse-loads of precious treasures, *viz.*, 657 books, 6 statues of Buddha, of gold, silver, sandalwood, and probably jade, and 150 particles of Buddha's supposed body, little red lumps of the size of beans, highly prized as relics in the Buddhist world. He had been absent fifteen years and a half, of which about two years had been spent on the outward and return journeys and the rest in study and wanderings in the

sacred land of Buddha. He estimated his travels to have covered 10,000 miles, which does not seem to be an exaggeration. From China to Peshawar and back, the distance must have been at least 7,000 miles through difficult country. His Indian round must have been a good deal over 3,000 miles.

After depositing his treasures in the Temple, his first care was to present himself before the Emperor, who was much interested in his travels and their results. He appointed monks and distinguished men of learning to assist him in his literary work. By the Emperor's express command he wrote an account of India (the Si-yu-ki) which was completed within three years. But until his death in 664-5 he continued to study, teach, edit and translate the books which he had brought.

The picture he draws of our country is valuable for the light which it throws on the conditions which existed here in the seventh century. He recognised the geographical unity of India, bounded on the north by the Himalayas and on the other three sides by the sea. The "Five Indies" which he frequently mentions merely meant the length and breadth of the land,—the north country, the south country, the east country, the west country, and central India. Politically he speaks of more than seventy kingdoms. Harsha's Empire in the north, and the Chalukya Empire in the south under Pulakesin II, were the most considerable, but among the rest there must have been some very petty kingdoms. Harsha's Empire fell to pieces soon after the

Pilgrim left. There was famine and rebellion in the land, and " wicked men slaughtered one another."

We know from other sources that China in those days was following an ambitious policy of expansion and that her envoys were in touch with India. In the Introduction to the Pilgrim's narrative, we have a reference to the "alternate flourishing and depression of good government" in India, and a vague claim that India owed allegiance to Chinese power and Chinese civilisation. This may be only flattery to the powerful reigning Emperor of China, but even so, it reveals the Chinese attitude of mind. There may have been political motives behind the insistent invitations of the king of Assam and of Harsha, and the little unpleasantness between the two kings on account of the Pilgrim.

When the priests of Nalanda, in persuading him to settle down in India, spoke slightingly of China as a country of Mlechhas, without saints or sages, the Pilgrim administered a courteous rebuke, which almost amounted to a retort. " In that country of China," he said, "the superior magistrates are clothed with dignity, and the laws are everywhere respected. The prince is regarded as sacred, the ministers are faithful, parents are loving, children are obedient, virtue and justice are highly esteemed, and age and uprightness held and advanced in honour."

The cities of India had broad and high walls, but the roads were narrow, tortuous passages. Butchers, fishermen, dancers, executioners, and scavengers had to live outside the city. The houses were built

of wattled bamboo or wood, and coated with lime. The floors were smeared with cow-dung and strewn with flowers. The Pilgrim was struck with the architecture of the Buddhist monasteries. There were towers at the four corners of a quadrangle, and the doors, windows, and walls were painted in various colours.

The clothing of the people was all white, loose, and untailored. The men wore a strip of cloth round the waist and up to the arm-pits, and left the right shoulder bare. The women wore a long garment covering both the shoulders and hanging down loose. The Kshatriyas and Brahmans were clean and simple in life, and very frugal. The upper classes were fond of jewellery. Their head-dresses were set with precious stones, and their bodies were adorned with rings, bracelets and necklaces. Wealthy merchants wore only bracelets. Most of the people went about bare-footed. They stained their teeth red or black, and bored holes in their ears for ornaments. They washed before every meal and cleaned their teeth after. The food utensils were usually of earthenware, and were thrown away after use. If they were of metal, they were washed in order to be used again.

The language of "Mid-India", which we may take to be South Bihar, pleased the Pilgrim, as being both harmonious and elegant. The intonation was clear and distinct. The children began their education with grammar, and passed on first to the useful arts; then to medicine, charms, etc.; then to logic and

reasoning; and finally to the higher principles of religion and Karma. Perhaps we may understand this to be the Buddhist scheme of education. We are expressly told that the Brahmans studied the four Vedas. Asceticism and voluntary poverty were held in high honour. Buddhism was esteemed, but does not seem to have been the prevailing religion.

The four classical castes are mentioned. The Brahmans observed strict ceremonial purity. The Kshatriyas were the race of kings; they upheld ideas of benevolence and mercy. The Vaishyas were traders. The Shudras were agriculturists. Menial castes are not mentioned, either because agriculture was depressed to the position of a menial occupation, or because the menials—scavengers, butchers, fishermen, dancers, etc.—were beyond the pale. There were also many mixed castes, which are not separately described. Widows were not allowed to remarry. In describing the different kingdoms of India in detail, the Pilgrim frequently mentions the caste of the kings. Many of them were Kshatriyas, but Brahman kings as well as Vaishya and Shudra kings were sometimes found.

The higher castes had their distinctive drinks. The Kshatriyas drank intoxicating liquors made from grapes and from sugarcane. The Vaishyas drank a strong distilled spirit. The Buddhist monks and the Brahmans drank syrups of grapes and of sugarcane. The low mixed castes were without any special drinks. In the matter of food, onions and garlic were looked on with disfavour. Food was eaten with the fingers. The Chinaman was quick

to note the absence of chopsticks, and even of spoons except in cases of illness. Animal diet included fish, mutton, antelope, and deer, generally fresh, sometimes salted.

Taxation was light, and there was little interference with the lives of the people. As regards the land revenue, the king's tenants paid one-sixth of the produce as rent. Traders paid light duties at ferries and octroi posts. Barter was common in the transactions of every-day life, and money was sparingly used. Ministers and officials had assignments of land for their support.

The Pilgrim's estimate of the character of the people is on the whole complimentary. "They are of hasty and irresolute temperaments, but of pure moral principles. They will not take anything wrongfully, and they yield more than fairness requires. They fear the retribution for sins in other lives, and make light of the consequences of conduct in this life. They do not practice deceit, and they keep their sworn obligations."

The picture thus presented is drawn with a skilled and sympathetic hand. It reflects also a mind free from jealousy or spite. Many of the features in it we recognise as having persisted through the centuries. The gentle mind which could follow these details and generalise on them, without importing anything petty or personal, was indeed worthy of the Buddhist philosophy which the Chinese Pilgrim had come so many thousands of miles to study, learn, and teach.

THE ARAB SHAIKH.

IBN BATUTA.

(*In India* 1333—1346).

The second traveller whose wanderings through India we shall follow was the famous Arab Shaikh and Doctor of Law, Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, known as Ibn Batuta. For shortness we shall call him the Shaikh. He was born at Tangier on the Atlantic coast of Morocco in 1304 A.D. He began his travels at the age of 21, soon after he had finished his studies in 1325. For twenty-eight years he wandered about among peoples of the most diverse races, climates, religions, and languages. In the course of his wanderings up and down he performed the pilgrimage to Mecca four times. He died in his native country, full of years and honours, in 1378, after a strenuous life of 74 years.

The extent of ground covered by him in his travels by sea and land was marvellous. The Atlantic coast, from which he started, was the Western boundary of the then-known world. He went as far as the Indian Archipelago and the Pacific coast of China, then the Eastern boundary of the world. In the North he penetrated as far as the modern district of Kazan* in Russia. The summer night there was so short that the morning prayer, he says, followed soon after the last prayer at night. He had formed the project of going

* Roughly 55° N. Latitude.

further North, to the land of six months' darkness, but he had to give up his intention "on account of the enormous difficulties it involved and the little profit it promised." He noted, however, some interesting details about the fur traffic with the Esquimaux, and the dog sledges with which they travelled in those frozen regions. He was twice in the Southern hemisphere, penetrating both times as far as the ninth degree of South latitude. Once he crossed the Equator to go to Zanzibar and Kilwa on the East coast of Africa, and again when he visited Sumatra and Java on his way to China. There were then no centres of population further South.

In Africa he not only traversed the whole of the North coast, and the East coast as far as there were any centres of civilisation, but also crossed the Sahara into Central Africa. He visited Timbuctu and the region of the Niger, which he mistook for the Nile. His description of these regions and of the manners and customs of their peoples has been amply confirmed by later travellers.

In Europe he visited those parts which were open to him. Spain was then the scene of a relentless war between the Christians and the Muslims, and Gibraltar itself had been threatened by the enemies of the Arabs. But the Shaikh visited the kingdom of Andalusia, including its capital Granada. In France, Sicily, and Italy, the conflict had long since ended in the disappearance of the Arabs, and no Arab could safely have shown himself in

those countries. The Byzantine Empire was still in conflict with Islam, but the Shaikh was lucky enough to get a safe conduct to its capital Constantinople, and he made full use of the opportunity to see all its sights more than a century before it became a Muslim city. In what is now the Southern part of Russia in Europe he travelled freely, as it was then in the hands of the Turks.

In Asia he visited every country, and some of them several times over. Syria, Asia Minor, Arabia, Iraq, Persia, Central Asia, India, Ceylon, the islands in the Indian Archipelago, and China complete the round of his travels. In most of these countries there were at least a few Muslims, and men of learning were welcomed and held in honour. On his side, he sought out men of learning, whether they were in busy centres like Damascus or Delhi, in the lonely wilds of Assam, or on the remote frontiers of China. For the Maldive islands, of which his graphic account still remains one of the best on record, his attraction was of another kind. He had an eye for picturesque and remote beauty, and he calls these islands "one of the wonders of the world." He was also fascinated by their savage life and pleasures, although a year's residence was enough to tire him and awake in him again the love of travel and adventure, which was the ruling passion of his life.

Wherever the Shaikh went, he tried to get into touch with the highest in the land. He was

entertained royally by kings, princes, and nobles; and he won power, wealth, and position for himself. With equal ease he entered the circle of the learned, and lived his life among them as one of themselves. He thus put himself into the best position for acquiring accurate information. There were few things in which he was not interested. He loved to trace the history of events, although his version is naturally coloured by the bias of his informants. He was keen on gathering facts of geography and natural history. His narrative is full of anecdotes, grave and gay. He never missed an opportunity of enquiring into the manners and customs of the courts and societies which he visited. He supplies glimpses of folk-lore which enable us to reconstruct a picture of the inner lives of the people with whom he came into contact. He is careful to record economic facts as they came to his notice—coins, weights and measures, movements of trade, products and manufactures, taxes and imports, and standards of living, in respect of houses, dress, food and drink. In his Arabic narrative he gives a number of Indian words as well as Arabic or Persian words used in a special sense in India*

We are mainly interested in his account of India, where he spent more than twelve years. He arrived in September 1333, filled the office of Kazi at Delhi from 1334 to the end of 1341, wandered about

* Among the Indian words we may note *chhāta* (royal umbrella), *khichri* (a dish made of rice and Mung pulse mixed), *amba* (mango), *kahār* (carrier), *jogis* (whom he looked upon as magicians) *sah* (merchant), and *chaudhri* (Hindu headman).

through Central India and the ports on the West Coast till July 1344, visited the Maldives, Ceylon, the Coromandel Coast, Bengal, and Assam, in the next two years, and China in the following year, touching the Malabar ports again on his return journey about April 1347.

A few of his experiences before he reached India are of interest as they make his account of the country clearer. His journeys and the intimate touch into which he got with the heart of affairs everywhere were rendered possible by the world-wide fraternity of Islam. The diffusion of the Arabic language among the learned of Islam solved the language difficulty for him not only in the Mediterranean countries, but in East Africa, in Turkish territories, in India and the Archipelago, and even in China. The Shaikh met a holy man in Alexandria, who had a brother in India, and another in China, between whom he carried messages of salutation. The Maldive islands owed their religion and their civilisation to a Muslim from Morocco, and our Shaikh was at once welcomed in the islands to a position of the highest authority.

India loomed large in those days in the mental horizon of the Muslim world. The Tartar invasion had destroyed some of the fairest cities in Central Asia. The Shaikh found Bokhara in ruins, and Persia in a state of division. The Seljuk Empire of Asia Minor was in a state of dissolution, and the Ottoman Empire was yet in its cradle. To the Turks the Shaikh pays a high

tribute of praise. In Asia Minor he found their hospitality charming, and he quotes with approval the saying; "Syria for good things but Turkey for good fellowship." The Turkish women wore no veils. In what is now Southern Russia, the Kipchak country, then under Turkish rule, the women held a higher rank in social life (as they do in Europe) than the men. This Kipchak country did a large trade in horses with India, which we shall presently describe. Apart from this and the maritime trade which we shall notice later, India possessed an attraction as the asylum for dispossessed princes, members of the overthrown Abbaside dynasty, scions of the old Ghaznavi family, and ambitious men of learning and talent from all lands.

The Shaikh's description of the social amenities in the Kipchak court are so graphic that we might notice it in a few words before we describe the horse trade with India. He saw beautiful and well-dressed princesses driving in open carriages, and attending the sports held in honour of the Id festival after prayers. At the formal sessions of the court the Grand Khātūn (Queen) walked in majesty, with numerous ladies carrying her train. On her arrival, the Amir, her husband, rose from his seat, saluted her with great ceremony, and seated her by his side. When the Grand Khatun granted a private audience to the traveller, she was pleased to hear a recitation from the Quran. She asked many questions about the Shaikh's travels. As a mark of special honour she served him

refreshments with her own hands. They consisted of mare's milk, which was served in light and elegant wooden cups. The Shaikh had not tasted mare's milk before, and with characteristic frankness he adds that it was not much to his taste.

The Kipchak country was the treeless open plain lying near the Sea of Azov and the rivers Don and Volga. It provided good pasture for horses, which were bred for the home and export markets. They were as plentiful, says the Shaikh, "as sheep in Morocco". They were so cheap that a *good* horse cost only the equivalent of a Moorish Dinār, say nine shillings. For the export trade to India, they were herded together in caravans of about 6,000 horses, each merchant having a share of a hundred to two hundred horses. Every 50 horses had a herdsman, who was himself mounted on a horse. These herdsmen are now represented by the modern Cossacks, who are known to be among the boldest riders in the world. They were expert in the use of the lasso. If a herdsman wished to catch a horse he threw a rope round his neck, got on his back, and managed him as he liked.

It is probable that these horse caravans followed mainly the overland route through the Turkish country of Central Asia and Afghanistan, crossing into India by the Gomal Pass, with the object of reaching Multan, their first big mart in India. In their native steppes they had free pasture : in India they were fed on grain. Heavy taxes used to be levied at Indian marts, but the fiscal policy of Muhammad

Tughluq (1325—1351), under whom the Shaikh served, was to abolish trade imports and reduce taxation to the simple forms prescribed by Muslim law.*

The trade was very flourishing, and there was a good demand for these horses throughout the country. As late as the days of Babar, Kipchak horses were considered suitable presents for noblemen and military commanders. The Shaikh notes that they were strong heavy horses, which they covered for purposes of warfare with coats of mail. For speed they got more costly horses from Arabia and the Persian Gulf.

The Shaikh passed through Afghanistan in the summer of 1333. He found Kabul quite a small village, which had lost its earlier importance. He seems to have known by the name of "Sindh" the whole of the country (below the hills) watered by the Indus and its tributaries, including in Sindh what modern usage calls the Punjab and Sindh. This is in accordance with the nomenclature of the Arab geographers. The river

*This reform dates from 1340-1. The trade flourished in spite of the heavy imposts, and the losses from deaths and thefts in the long overland journey. As the ordinary prices were high, the profits were considerable. An ordinary horse in India sold for the equivalent of 25 Moorish Dinars, or say £ 11 sterling, and sometimes double or treble this price, while a good horse fetched twenty times this price. Assuming the losses on the way to be about 50 per cent., the average price in Kipchak about 8 *s*. per head, and the average selling price in India about £ 15, and allowing about 32s. per head (on the original number of the caravan) for all expenses, a caravan of 6000 horses would fetch a profit of £ 33,000 which would be a handsome return for a joint stock enterprise in those days.

Indus he also knew by the name of "Sindh", or by the description of "the Panj-áb,"—the river with the five tributaries. He noted that the cultivation of this tract was dependent on the inundations of this river in the rainy season, and recalled the example of the Nile in Egypt. All the rest was desert. Multan was the first place of importance at which he arrived within the borders of India. The Sultan of the country was Muhammad Shah Tughluq, "Emperor of India and Sindh." As the Shaikh came to Multan, he must have come through the Gomal Pass, then the ordinary trade route into India on the north-west frontier.

About the same time other distinguished men had arrived from Khorasan, Bokhara, and Samarkand, to visit the Sultan of Delhi. At Multan they had to await orders from Delhi. There was an efficient service of news-writers who reported such arrivals and obtained the Emperor's orders. Delhi was connected with all the far-flung dominions of the Sultan by a highly organised system of post. The ordinary post consisted of the Sultan's horses stationed at every four miles (or *kos* ?) along the roads. The express post consisted of fast runners stationed at every third of a mile (or *kos* ?). Every runner was armed with a stick three feet long, fitted with bells which announced his approach. He ran at full speed, and as he approached a station the next man stood ready to relieve him and run on to the next stage. Fruits from the frontier for the Sultan's table were carried by this express post, as well as water

from the Ganges when the Sultan was at Daulatabad in the Deccan. This express post was capable of a speed of 140 miles a day. Multan was over 400 miles from Delhi, which meant 40 days' slow journey with baggage. The news must have been sent by ordinary post, and the reply expected was in the shape of an escort, with a deputation of high officers for the reception of the distinguished visitors. Such a deputation actually arrived within two months.

But the Shaikh was not content to wait all this time doing nothing. He made himself agreeable to local Governors, and with them visited lower Sindh as far as the mouth of the Indus. He made the acquaintance of a rhinoceros in one of the marshes, and felt the extreme heat in the region round Sibi, though the summer was nearly ended. To Lahiri, on the Arabian Sea, (the Larry Bunder of later geographers), he went down the river with the Governor. He describes the orderly march, with flags flying, of fifteen river-boats on tour. Forty men rowed each boat, to the accompaniment of trumpets and kettledrums followed by singing. At meal times the boats were stopped, and the meals were served on land, to the accompaniment of music. Sentries were posted and relieved at night at regular intervals.

On his return to Multan he joined the large company of distinguished foreigners who were proceeding to Delhi, escorted with due ceremony by the Sultan's deputation from Delhi. These foreigners were much honoured in India, and filled the highest offices in

the Tughluq Court and Empire. They were indeed preferred to the people of India, and were called "the honoured ones" (*a'izza*)* and not "foreigners". They came from all countries, Yemen, Iraq, Persia, Central Asia, Khorasan, and more distant lands. Khorasan was the corner of north-east Afghanistan (which was not then a separate kingdom) and north-west Persia. Vaguely the term came to be applied to the tract beyond the north-west frontier of India. As there was a large influx of casual visitors from this direction, whom the Sultan did not want, he had ordered them to be admitted only on their executing a bond to live in India. The Shaikh executed such a bond, and joined the distinguished company on their way to Delhi. They were now guests of the State, and all their expenses were found for them.

Multan was a recruiting depot for the armies of the Sultan, both horse and foot. Foreigners with no social or academic distinction but good physique were there enlisted in the army. There were severe tests of marksmanship and riding. No fire-arms are mentioned. The marksmanship was with bow and arrow, or with lance and target. The skill showed by recruits determined the pay on which they started.

The route followed by the Sultan's guests passed through Pak Pattan the famous shrine at the crossing of the Satlaj. It was then known as Ajodhan.

**Cf.* the modern use of the word "Sahib."

Interesting details are given of the State banquets that were served on the march. First the Sultan's Chamberlain stood up and bowed in the direction in which the Sultan then was. All the guests followed suit. After this homage to the sovereign, they sat down to their meal. As a preliminary, water sweetened with candy or syrup was served out in cups of gold, silver, or glass. Then the Chamberlain said Bismillah by way of grace. Bread, or rather a kind of broad thin cake, was then served out. Large pieces of roast meat (a fourth or a sixth of a sheep) were placed before each guest. A kind of pastry then followed, filled with a Halwa called Sābūniya. Next, in porcelain dishes, came meat cooked in butter, onions, and ginger; followed by Samosak, which was a kind of fried pastry enclosing mince cooked with almonds, pistachios, walnuts, onions, and spices. Four or five Samosaks were placed before each guest. The next dish was chicken served with rice cooked in butter, followed by a little cake called *Hāshimi*, and something called the *Qāhiriya*, which is not further described. Then in jugs was brought a kind of drink called *Fiqqā*,' probably a red *sherbet* made of pomegranate juice. The repast was closed with the chewing of betel leaves and areca nuts, of which various virtues are mentioned by the Shaikh. At the conclusion of the feast, the ceremonies of grace after meal and homage to the sovereign were performed in the same manner as before its commencement.

When the visitors arrived in Delhi, the Sultan was away in Kanauj, a distance of about 230 miles. A reference was made to him, evidently by express post, for a reply was received by the evening of the second day. Meanwhile the Sultan's Minister Khwaja Jahan, received the visitors on behalf of the State, and the Sultan's mother Makhdum-i-Jahan received the ladies of the party. Her palace was also the scene of receptions in honour of the distinguished men guests. This lady was noted for her charities and the number of alms-houses which she had endowed for the poor. She had lost her eyesight. She was held in extraordinary reverence by the Sultan, and her tomb in the family mausoleum in Tughluqabad (old Delhi) can be seen to the present day.

The city of Delhi is described in glowing terms by the Shaikh, as a city of grandeur, uniting both beauty and strength. The city which he saw was the old city of Tughluqabad, about 12 miles south of the modern city. Even then there were four towns: the old Hindu city, whose site was near the Qutb Minar; Siri, a mile to the north-east, which was the capital of the Khalji dynasty, which preceded the Tughluqs; Tughluqabad quite four miles east of the Qutb, the town which was built by the Sultan's father, and the one where the main population then was; and lastly, the Jahān-panah (otherwise called Adilabad), built for the Sultan's own residence. Since his time other cities have been built in Delhi, notably the present walled town built by Shah Jahan, and the new British town of Raisina, still in process of construction.

The main city which the Shaikh saw was surrounded by a wall " the like of which" he says " does not exist in the world." The wall was 11 cubits ($16\frac{1}{2}$ feet) wide, and had accommodation for sentries and for the storage of grain and munitions of war. It must have been a double wall, for we are told that soldiers, horse and foot, could go all round the city inside the wall. It was built of stone below and bricks higher up. There were 28 gates, and many towers close to each other. Outside one of the gates was the cemetery, in which different kinds of flowers were in bloom all through the year. The Mosque used as the Jāmi' Masjid was the one near the Qutb. In describing it the Shaikh refers to its beautiful red and white stone, its iron pillar " of seven metals ", its noble (Qutb) Minar, and the incomplete (Alai) minar. As the wells of Delhi only held brackish water, two large reservoirs of fresh water were maintained by the State. The small one was two miles long and a mile wide, and was provided with pavilions (with seats),—on the steps, and in the centre of the water. People went to it as a place of public recreation. The larger one was made gay with music and a bazaar. The music, both vocal and instrumental, was such a feature of it that it was called Tarb-abad (the place of music or mirth).

There was splendour in the city, and the lavishness and generosity of the Sultan knew no bounds. Even before the Sultan returned to Delhi, he assigned some villages to the Shaikh for his maintenance

with a revenue of 5,000 dinars* per annum. When he arrived, he added two further villages and an annuity of 12,000 dinars, with a choice of a high post under him. Eventually he appointed the Shaikh to be the Qazi (Judge) of Delhi, with emoluments of 12,000 dinars per annum from an assignment of land, a cash gift of 12,000 dinars for immediate expenses, a horse with saddle and bridle, and a *mihrabi* robe of honour.†

There was an additional allowance for his attendants. In spite of all these lavish payments the Shaikh got into debt. An Arabic poem in praise of the sovereign procured the Shaikh an order for the payment of 55,000 dinars, with a mild rebuke. From all cash gifts, there was a customary deduction of ten per cent at the treasury. It would be interesting to know whether this deduction was in the nature of a separate authorised fund, or was a mere interception of the Sultan's bounties by his officials.

These were not isolated instances of lavishness. The Sultan scattered largesses freely. And yet

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*In connection with India. Ibn Babuta's dinar (unless he expressly mentions that it was the gold coin of the West) may be taken to be the current silver coin of India, of about the weight of the later rupee,——in value roughly about ⅛th of a pound sterling.

† The robes of honour were distinguished by symbolical figures embroidered on them, according to the recipient's rank and functions. For instance, an officer appointed to help poor persons in suits against the powerful had a robe embroidered with the figure of a lion. The Qazi had certain ecclesiastical functions to perform, symbolised by the *mihrāb*, or the arche in a mosque, showing the direction of Mecca. He therefore received a *mihrābi*, or a robe embroidered with a symbol of his sacred office.

there seems to have been some intelligent control in fiscal matters. A regular procedure was prescribed for the check and control of treasury payments. Heavy trade duties and transit dues, previously levied, were abolished. Among darker traits in the Sultan's character several instances of torture and cruel punishments are mentioned. On the other hand, adequate arrangements were made for the administration of justice. The Sultan personally sat in open court to hear suitors on Mondays and Fridays; on other days he heard petitions after the afternoon prayers. He had also five judges of appeal sitting simultaneously, with an appeal to him in the last resort.

Delhi suffered greatly in population on account of the unsuccessful attempt to transfer the capital to Daulatabad in the Deccan. There were not wanting men who raised their voices against the arbitrary acts of the sovereign. One of the leading Shaikhs, Shihabuddin Khorasani, declined to take office under "a tyrant." He was subjected to many indignities and tortures, and was asked at least to withdraw the word "tyrant". On his refusing to do so, he was beheaded. The court, including Ibn Batuta, generally seem to have sympathised with him. For this sympathy Ibn Batuta incurred the Sultan's wrath, renounced his office, and took to asceticism. The Sultan more than once tried to conciliate him, and finally appointed him his ambassador to China in 1342.

This embassy gave our traveller a chance of escaping from the court of the Tughluq Sultan of Delhi. It was accompanied with costly presents, (including horses, textiles, and swords), which were never delivered, as they were lost in a shipwreck. But the Shaikh had many adventures on land and sea and in islands, which we cannot review in detail, as we must confine ourselves to his account of India. He left Delhi in July 1342. The route he followed to the seacoast is interesting. Then, as now, the principal ports were on the west coast. Lahiri (near modern Karachi) was the port for Yemen and the Persian Gulf. Cambay in Gujarat was the principal gate of the Delhi Empire by sea, but Chinese ships did not come up so far north, and none but Chinese ships were allowed in Chinese seas. The Embassy therefore made for Cambay, to take a Muslim ship to a Malabar port, where a Chinese ship would be available. To Cambay they travelled by way of Koel (modern Aligarh), Kanauj, Gwalior, Chanderi, Daulatabad, and Nandarbár. This route may appear circuitous; but the country between Delhi and Gwalior was (as it still is) wild and full of ravines, while the road to Kanauj was the high-road to Bengal. The road from Kanauj to Daulatabad was one of the most important highways under the Tughluqs. provided with towers at regular intervals by way of milestones, on which distances in both directions were marked.

The roads were not free from robbers, and the escort of 1,000 men was not wholly unnecessary.

When the Shaikh lagged behind the escort, he had various adventures among hostile people. A place called Barwan* was infested with lions, so bold that they attacked human habitations. Dhar (Zihar) was the capital of Malwa, and produced fine betel leaves which were exported all the way to Delhi (24 days' journey). A curious anecdote is told of the man who held this place in fief. He established a beautiful hospice on the top of a hill, and fed all comers from the revenues of his fief. But he husbanded the revenues of his fief so carefully that in spite of his open hospitality he saved money. After some years he took thirteen lakhs of savings to the Sultan, who accepted it for the treasury but expressed no pleasure, for nothing, thought he, should have been saved from the feeding of the public!

Daulatabad was an important centre, equal in rank to Delhi. It was governed by a Viceroy Qutlu Khan, a preceptor of the Sultan. The viceroyalty extended as far east as the Telinga Coast (the Telugu country) with its dependencies, and as far west as Ságar, which seems to have been an important place on the lower Narbada. It was a populous tract covering three months' journey. The revenue of the province was once farmed for seventeen crores. Daulatabad was also an important military station, and the fortress was used (like that of Gwalior) for State prisoners. It was the centre of the Maratha country. The Shaikh admired the

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* Probably an error in the manuscripts for Narwār, in the ravines of the Sind river, 44 miles south Gwalior.

skill in arts and crafts of the Maratha men and the beauty of the Maratha women, especially in the shape of their nose and eye-brows. There were rich Hindu merchants, known as Sahs, who did a flourishing trade in gems and precious stones. Music was popular, and a special quarter was set apart for singers, male and female.

Cambay was a beautiful city, with elegant houses and mosques. It was not defended by walls. Its maritime trade was of great importance, and its harbour admitted large sea-going ships. Most of the inhabitants were foreign Muslim merchants, who emulated each other in erecting handsome buildings and charitable establishments. In a neighbouring port the party took three ships, on which they embarked for the Malabar ports. One of them had sixty oars, and a deck to protect the rowers from stones and arrows. On the leading ship they also embarked 50 archers and 50 Abyssinian warriors. The Abyssinians were powerful on the West Coast, and when an Abyssinian was on board, the ship was not molested by pirates.

Sailing south they reached Hinawar (Honawar) where there was a Muslim Sultan, probably of a foreign (Arab) race. He took tribute from Malabar, but was himself tributary to a Hindu king. He wore silk and fine cotton, plaited his hair, and carried a small turban on his head. His banquets consisted mostly of rice, with which were served meat, fish, vegetables, and sour milk, but no

bread. The country had no agriculture, but depended mainly on maritime trade. The women were pretty and chaste, and knew the Quran by heart. They wore a gold ring in their nose, and their dress was an unsewn cloth wound round the body. There were thirteen girls' schools and twenty-three boys' schools in the town.

Three days' sail (50 miles) from Honawar was Sindabur (Kandapur), where the Malabar country began. It embraced the coast strip as far south as Kolam (Quilon, now in Travancore State), a distance of about 380 miles. It was a distinct country, whose special features are described by the Shaikh. It produced pepper, ginger, cocoanut, betel leaves, betel-nuts, cinnamon, and bananas. But pepper was its speciality, and the Shaikh describes carefully the pepper vine and how the pepper was produced and marketed. By the laws of Malabar the succession to the Crown was to the sister's son and not to the son. The roads were shaded with trees and seemed to pass through gardens. There were stiles between every two gardens. Only the King rode on horseback; every one else either walked on foot or rode in palanquins. The country was divided into twelve Hindu kingdoms, which respected each other's boundaries, and did not covet each other's possessions. But there were many Muslims settled there, and also a small Jewish colony. The Muslims were encouraged and held in esteem and honour. Many beautiful mosques were to be found in all the towns,

and some of them were supported by the Hindus. The Muslims were merchants and sea-faring folk. They had their own Qazis and ecclesiastical officers, chiefly of the Shāfei School. They also usually held the offices of Admiral and Harbour Master (*Shah Bandar*), and were captains of ships, including Chinese Junks.

The three chief ports at which big Chinese vessels called were Quilon, Calicut, and Hili (Mount Delly, 20 miles north of Cannanore). The biggest of them was Calicut,—an international port, with shipping from China, Java, Ceylon, the Maldives, Yemen, and Persia. For the embassy to China a Chinese ship had to be selected. The Shaikh gives a detailed account of the Chinese ships. The bigger ones were called Junks. The word "*Junk*" is derived from the Chinese, and through Ibn Batuta has passed into European vocabularies. It was a ship with twelve sails, made of split bamboo woven liken mats. The sails were never furled, even when the ship rode at anchor. She was manned by 600 sailors and 400 fighting men, including archers. The oars were as long as the masts, and twelve or fifteen men worked each oar standing. There were four decks, on which were ranged private cabins, public rooms, and merchants' halls. Women and children were taken among the passengers. The privacy was so great that an individual might be on board without being seen by any one until the ship's arrival at a port. Vegetables were grown in tubs on board. The captain kept great state "like an Amir."

One of these Junks was selected for the embassy, and the presents and the passengers embarked on board. But the Shaikh did not like the cabin assigned to him and preferred to take a smaller vessel. It was a Friday afternoon when the Junk set sail. The Shaikh hoped to board his vessel after Friday prayers. But a great storm arose in the afternoon, and so great was the fury of the waves that it was impossible for the Shaikh to get to his vessel, which had on board his personal effects and his servants. He passed the night on the beach. The Junk meanwhile struck a rock and was lost, with every one and everything on board. The sea threw up the dead bodies of the Shaikh's colleagues of the embassy next morning, and they were buried with due honours. Meanwhile the smaller vessel, fearing for her own safety, if she remained near the rocks, set sail, carrying all the Shaikh's property, which he never recovered. He heard long afterwards that it was disposed of in distant places like China, Java, and Bengal. Such was the end of the embassy according to the Shaikh's own account, and we have no other.

It was impossible now for him to show his face again at Delhi. He wandered about for a little while in Malabar, visited the Maldives, where he stayed over a year, performed a pilgrimage to Adam's Peak in Ceylon, and got on to the Coromandel Coast. He visited his brother-in-law the Sultan of Madura, whose kingdom was inherited from a rebel against the Sultanate of Delhi. Here he

faced a terrible outbreak of plague, which carried off his brother-in-law. He himself suffered from a severe attack of fever, of which he was cured by a decoction of tamarind.

After another visit to Malabar and to the Maldives, he visited Bengal and Assam. His description of Bengal is worth examination. He never saw a country where provisions were so cheap, but its climate was damp and foggy. He quotes the epigram of a Khorasani who described it in Persian as *duzakh pur na'mat*, "hell full of good things." Eight fat chickens could be bought for a twentieth of a dinar,* and a fat ram for only twice that price. A wealthy countryman of the Shaikh's is said to have lived there with a wife and servant on two-fifths of a dinar for the food of all three for a year!

The political condition of Bengal was one of civil war between two powers, both of whom were rebels against the authority of Delhi. Fakhruddin (*alias* Fakhra) had naval power, and held the deltaic country from the Hugli to the Meghna. His capital was at Sudgawan (Satgaon), an important port near the mouth of the Hugli; but the deltaic country formed by the Hugli, the Ganges, the Meghna, and their innumerable affluents, interlacing with each other, afforded him easy access by water to the remotest villages.

*An Indian silver dinar in Ibn Batuta, as before explained, may be taken to be a silver coin equivalent to a modern rupee, but as the ratios of the values of gold and silver were then different, it may be taken as about an eighth of a gold sovereign.

He held Sonārgāon, then the eastern capital (now in Dacca District). His rival Ali Shah was powerful on land, and held Lakhnauti (now in Malda District), which under that name and under the name of Gaur was the recognised capital of Bengal for many centuries. In the season of the rains, when Ali Shah's land forces were powerless, Fakhra used to invade Lakhnauti by water. In the dry season, when the land forces had the advantage, Ali Shah used to push back his rival, and spread himself over the unfortunate land. The Shaikh avoided them both. He went up a month's journey from Satgaon to Kamrup (Assam) at the foot of the Himalayas, visited a holy saint from Tabriz, and returned by river to Sonārgāon, from which he took a Junk to Java.

His further journeys to the Pacific and to China are interesting, but we cannot follow them here. In the spring of 1347, on his return journey, he touched at the Malabar ports again, rapidly passed on to the Persian Gulf, and after performing his fourth pilgrimage to Mecca, made his way by land to Cairo. He then took ship again, visited Tunis and the island of Sardinia, and returned to Morocco in November 1349. As was natural, his heart was stirred when he returned to his native land, which he calls "the best of countries." His restless spirit took him as a volunteer to the Andalusian war, and later as a traveller to the Western Sudan, from which he was recalled by his Sultan in December 1353.

Meanwhile the story of his travels had been noised abroad. The wonders of which he had told were exaggerated and sometimes transformed beyond all recognition. Intelligent men began to doubt his veracity. There was no authorised written account. The Sultan of Morocco deputed his own secretary, Ibn Juzai, a Spanish Muslim, to take down notes from the traveller's dictation, use such notes as the traveller might have had, and compile a clearly written narrative of events, with an account of the notable men and cities that this " world-traveller " had seen. The result was the *Travels* as we now have them. Ibn Juzai performed his task well, and finished it in December 1355. He calls it " extracting the pearl from its oyster shell." Few works of such celebrity and such age have been preserved in their original manuscripts as this one has been. It was one of the prizes which fell to the French in their conquest of Algeria. When they captured the town of Constantine in 1837, the very autograph manuscript of Ibn Juzai fell into their hands. It is carefully preserved in the National Library at Paris. Though its pages are worm-eaten and yellow with age, and the beautiful writing in the Spanish Arabic script has faded and become illegible in many places, it is a literary treasure of rare value.

The picture which this intrepid traveller has left us of India under Muhammad Shah Tughluq is drawn with due regard to light and shade. He has given us many details of social, economic, and

religious life, which professed historians have omitted. His general accuracy and good faith have been proved in many points where his statements can be tested by other and independent testimony.

He has nicely balanced the good and bad points in the character of the Sultan of Delhi. Writing thousands of miles away in his own country, and after the death of Muhammad Shah (1351), he had nothing to gain by praising him or lose by criticising him. The traveller's world-wide experience gave him standards of comparison. The only point for which we shall have to make allowances is a slight bias in his mind against a king who found out his communications with a man executed on a charge of high treason. The king gets most credit for generosity, and is blamed most for cruelty. But incidentally other characteristics emerge from the narrative. That the king held and exercised arbitrary power was nothing unusual for the age. He had no outstanding personalities about him. His views were not narrow: in some respects they were in advance of his age. He maintained good communications in his empire, and his organisation was efficient. But he had extended his power far beyond the limits of his physical and moral resources. The outlying provinces in the east and south were breaking away from his empire. A pleasing feature of his character was his tenderness for his mother and his reverence for the memory of a previous Khalji sovereign who had been kind to him in his humbler days. His respect for justice was shown by the freedom with

which he allowed cases to be instituted against him in his personal capacity by his subjects in the courts of his judges. He insisted on appearing unarmed and on standing before the judge like any other party, and he obeyed the judge's decrees.

The Nobility of the Delhi court was not hereditary. Rank usually went with office. The highest title had the Persian suffix of *Jahān;* for example, the Prime Minister was Khwaja Jahān (Khwaja-i-Jahan). His office combined civil and military powers. Ladies were eligible for the highest titles, for the Sultan's mother was Makhduma Jahān (Makhduma-i-Jahan). Another title had the Arabic suffix of *Mulk*; for example, Imād-ul-Mulk. This title persisted through Mughal times, and still remains in the Hyderabad State. The prefix *Malik* ("king") was applied to a nobleman generally, while the prefix *Maulana* ("our lord") was applied to any learned man. Our traveller was amused on being introduced himself as *Maulana.* Special noblemen had the privilege of a flag being carried before them and a kettledrum sounded when they went out in state. Among the recipients of this distinction we find mentioned a Hindu accountant named Ratan, whose financial talents obtained for him the favour of the Sultan and the governorship of Sindh. Sons of defeated Rajas were honoured for their valour and created nobles.

Learning was held in honour, and ecclesiastical offices enjoyed distinction and influence. There

were numerous pious foundations, with liberal endowments ; but the many saintly men who scattered themselves all over the country in the service of religion probably carried more influence with the people than with the rulers. They were independent men, and were often outspoken critics of the State, and sometimes they suffered for the courage of their convictions. Hindu Jogis were in favour with the Sultan, who admitted them to his society. They wore long, matted hair, practised extreme asceticism, and lived in caves and underground holes. Belief in witch-craft was common, and poor women believed to be witches were burnt alive.

In the matter of social ceremonies, it is curious to find at this early age the Muslim wedding ceremonies already borrowing many features from the Hindus. The wedding of the Sultan's sister to a Syrian Amir is described in detail. Two grand reception tents were erected, of which the floors were covered with beautiful carpets. There were performances by musicians and dancers of both sexes. General public feasts were given for fifteen days, and the special guests had to be present night and day. Two nights before the ceremony of conducting the bride to the bridegroom's house, the ladies of the royal household took possession of the destined bridal apartment, and decorated it in grand style. As the bridegroom was an Arab, without relations in India, special royal ladies undertook the functions of the bridegroom's mother, sister, and paternal and

maternal aunts. Two batches of noblemen were also appointed to represent the bridegroom and the bride respectively. According to the custom of the country the bride's party had to station themselves at the bride's house, and the bridegroom's party had to force their way in by a symbolic victory. The bridegroom's hands and feet were dyed with henna, and he was decked out in a gorgeous dress of blue silk, heavily covered with gold and precious stones, a gift of the Sultan. He had to wear a crown and a veil of flowers*. At this point the simple Arab in him revolted against these effeminate ceremonies, but he was at last persuaded to conform to the custom of the country. When it came to fighting with the bride's party, the bridegroom and his party did it with alacrity. Their complete victory gave them the bride, who offered *Tambol* (betel leaves and nuts) to the bridegroom with her own hands. Coins of gold were showered round among the guests, and the bridegroom carried away the captured bride in a palanquin, he himself riding on horseback. The princesses in the bride's *cortege* preceded her on horseback, and other ladies on foot. Whenever the procession passed the house of a grandee, the grandee had to come out and scatter pieces of gold and silver among the crowd. Thus passed the bridegroom and his bride to the bridal chamber in his house. Next day the distribution of presents completed the wedding celebrations. Besides minor presents the Sultan gave the bridegroom the revenues of four provinces.

* *Sehra*, though the word is not mentioned.

Plague was rife in big cities both in Northern and in Southern India, and it seriously hampered the operations of the army. Towards the end of the Shaikh's stay in Delhi, there was a serious famine. The measures taken for famine relief are interesting. As the land revenue was probably collected in kind, and there were no crops, there was an automatic remission of revenue. But the people had to be fed and the method followed in Delhi is described by the Shaikh. He himself took part in the organisation of relief and had 500 persons to look after. Mohalla* registers were made by Qazis and other officers. The order was that about a seer of grain were to be supplied per day from the State granaries to every individual, big or small, slave or free. In the circumstances it was a liberal average.

We have already referred to the Sultan's fiscal policy, to the maritime trade of the ports, and to the land trade from the North-West frontier. Land revenue formed the principal source of the State revenue. We are justified in the inference that it was collected in kind, as the Shaikh went out to receive some grain collections from Amroha while the Sultan was in the Deccan. There were State reserve granaries, like those we mentioned when describing the city walls of Delhi. The grain was no doubt commuted into cash as occasion required, and the accounts were kept in cash sums. Where the revenue was farmed, the revenue farmer contracted to pay a lump sum, and was sometimes ruined in the process. The

* A mohalla is a small division of a town

Governor of a Province was entitled to retain five per cent. of the revenue for himself. The villages, at least round Delhi, were arranged in groups of a hundred each, under a Hindu Chaudhri who represented the people, and an official of the Government who was responsible to the Treasury.

The account shows clearly both constructive and disruptive forces at work. Many new elements had been introduced into India since the visit of the Chinese pilgrim seven centuries before, but we miss the note of modernity which we clearly discern in the narrative of the French traveller who came three centuries after him.

THE FRENCH PHILOSOPHER.

FRANCOIS BERNIER.

(*In India* 1659—1667).

The third traveller, whose visit to India we shall now consider, was a French physician and philosopher, Francois Bernier. He was a very different man from the Chinaman and the Arab, whose accounts of India we have reviewed. The seventeenth century, in which he lived, saw the dawn of modern science and modern thought. The leading nations of the world now began to be swayed in their public policy by motives other than those of religion as understood in the mediæval world. The balance between the eastern and the western worlds was now being gradually altered in favour of the west. The France of Louis XIV marks a definite stage in the evolution of human history. Of that France, Bernier was a typical enlightened citizen.

Europe, having passed through the great religious struggle of the Thirty Years' War (1618—1648), set before itself the ideal of political and economic expansion, east and west. The agriculture and trade of Central Europe had been ruined, and the lead had definitely passed to the maritime powers of Western Europe. Holland and England had flourishing East India Companies, which, in spite of their mutual rivalries, were acquiring wealth, influence, and power in the East. France saw that her political and military importance was not enough to carry her through in the new movements

that were taking shape in the world. She wanted naval and colonial power, and both these were dependent upon maritime trade. A very able finance minister* of Louis XIV attempted to foster France's ambitions in that direction. For this purpose the collection of accurate information about foreign countries was necessary, and French travellers of the highest standing were able and willing to render this service to their mother-land.

Bernier was not the only French traveller that came out to India about that time. There was a French jeweller called Tavernier, who has left us an account of the wonderful Peacock Throne of the Mughals, and of various diamonds of note, one of which has been identified with the Koh-i-Nur. This was the diamond which, after the British conquest of the Panjab, passed to the regalia of Imperial Britain. Another French jeweller who travelled to India was Monsieur Chardin. He was a Protestant, who performed two journeys to the East. He settled down in England as a Court Jeweller, was knighted by Charles II as Sir John Chardin, and is buried in Westminster Abbey, where British national heroes find their lasting resting place. There were also French artillery officers in Aurangzib's service. These men met in India and exchanged notes about what they saw. They also met the numerous Portuguese priests who were resident in Agra and Lahore. They retailed a great deal of gossip and petty talk often not free from spite. Some of it got incorporated

* Colbert.

into the narrative of even a philosophic observer like Bernier. But we can easily make allowances for this and profit by the criticism of Bernier's keen intellect on Indian life.

Bernier was born in 1620, of French parents who were cultivators of the soil. He received a good education, and travelled between the ages of 27 and 30 in Germany, Poland, Switzerland and Italy. This opened up his mind and laid the foundations for that taste for wider travel which eventually took him to the East. He took his degree as Doctor of Medicine in 1652 in the University of Montpellier in the south of France. A visit to Palestine and Syria in 1654 brought him into contact with the Ottoman Empire. His verdict on that Empire and on the East generally is not favourable. As a good Catholic, he seems to have carried a prejudice against Islam. Between 1656 and 1658 he visited Egypt and the Red Sea ports of Arabia. From Mocha, well-known for its exports of coffee, he took an Indian ship to Surat, which was then the principal Indian port for Arabia. He seems to have arrived in India early in 1659.

India had just passed through a political and military conflict. The decrepit Shah Jahan's illness in September 1657 had led to a war of succession between his four sons. This war had ended in the victory of Aurangzib. In July 1658 Aurangzib had assumed the reins of power at Delhi, although his formal accession to the throne was not proclaimed till a year later. Shah Jahan was still living, but

confined with royal honours in Agra Fort. Aurangzib's elder brothers Dara and Shuja were still at large. Many different factions had fought for or against the different competitors to the throne, and the Rajput princes had been divided. Many versions of the exciting events of the war and of the motives which actuated the chief belligerents were current all over the country. Shah Jahan had been on the whole a popular monarch, and the unusual circumstance of a son succeeding to the throne while his father was living and his two elder brothers, though defeated, yet commanded a certain amount of popular favour, seized hold of the French philosopher's mind and produced from his pen a graphic though imaginative description of the struggle.

Bernier started on his way to the capital (Delhi) from Surat, and got as far as Ahmedabad. That city was in a state of turmoil. The vanquished prince Dara was within a day's journey, and Ahmedabad had shut its gates against him for fear of Aurangzib. The prince was in great straits. On the one hand, the governors and officials gave him no countenance, as repreresenting a lost cause. On the other, the country was infested by freebooters of the Koli tribe, an aboriginal forest race inhabiting the outskirts of Gujarat. They hung round his camp, bent on pillage and murder. To crown his misfortunes, one of the ladies of the prince's household fell ill. By a strange chance Bernier encountered the camp as he was going up north. The prince wanted a physician, and offered him the protection of his

camp, such as it was, against the murderous attentions of the Kolis. Bernier remained with him a few days. But the position in the camp itself was precarious. The bad news from Ahmedabad soon arrived, that the Governor of the city had declared himself positively hostile to Dara.

The rest of the scene may be described in the Philosopher's own words, "It was at the break of day that the Governor's message was delivered, and the shrieks of the females drew forth tears from every eye. We were all overwhelmed with confusion and dismay, gazing in speechless horror at each other, at a loss what plan to recommend, and ignorant of the fate which perhaps awaited us from hour to hour. We observed Dara stepping out more dead than alive, speaking now to one, then to another; stopping and consulting even the commonest soldier. He saw consternation depicted in every countenance, and felt assured that he should be left without a single follower. But what was to become of him? Whither must he go? To delay his departure was to accelerate his ruin.

"During the time that I remained in this prince's retinue, we marched, nearly without intermission, day and night; and so insupportable was the heat, and so suffocating the dust, that of the three large oxen of Gujarat which drew my carriage, one had died, another was in a dying state, and the third was unable to proceed from fatigue. Dara felt anxious to retain me in his service, especially as one of his wives had a bad wound in her leg; yet neither

his threats nor entreaties could procure for me a single horse, ox, or camel; so totally destitute of power and influence had he become!

" I remained behind, therefore, because of the absolute impossibility of continuing the journey, and could not but weep when I beheld the prince depart with a force diminished to four or five hundred horsemen. There were also a couple of elephants, laden, it was said, with gold and silver ....I could not cherish the hope that the prince would succeed in crossing the sandy desert ....In fact nearly the whole of the men, and many of the women, did perish; some dying of thirst, hunger, or fatigue, while others were killed by the hands of the merciless Kolis. Happy would it have been for Dara, had he not himself survived this perilous march!"

Here we must leave the unfortunate prince Dara, and proceed with Bernier's own experiences with the Kolis. Though a philosopher, he had to use an ordinary man's wiles to excite their compassion and keep what little money he had about his person. "I made a grand display," he says, "of my professional skill; and my two servants, who experienced the same terror as myself, declared that I was the most eminent physician in the world, and that Dara's soldiers had used me extremely ill, depriving me of everything valuable. It was fortunate for me that we succeeded in creating in these people an interest in my favour; for after detaining me seven or eight

days, they attached a bullock to my carriage, and conducted me within view of the minarets of Ahmedabad." In this city he met a Mughal nobleman who was proceeding to Delhi. He now travelled under his protection. On the way up through the desert of Rajputana, they saw dead men, elephants, oxen, horses, and camels,—gruesome wrecks of what had been Dara's army.

In spite of these interludes and delays, Bernier reached Delhi within seven weeks of leaving Surat,—a distance of 800 miles. By this time his money was nearly exhausted, and he was glad to accept an allowance from the Mughal Court. He calls this a salary in his capacity as a physician. But as he seems to have filled no office or post under Aurangzib, it was really in the nature of an allowance for hospitality, such as was usually made to distinguished strangers according to the traditions of the Mughal Court. He also got another "salary" of the same nature from a nobleman and high official at the Court. This amounted to three hundred rupees per month. But the cost of provisions in Delhi according to the standards he demanded was so high that he would almost have starved if he had depended on that allowance alone. He could not help recalling the fact that in France he could have lived, on half a rupee per day, on as good food as the king himself.

The nobleman to whose retinue Bernier attached himself was Dānishmand Khan, who had been originally a Persian merchant. He rose in

the Mughal service to the high office of Bakhshi (paymaster of the forces), and the rank of Panjhazāri (Commander of five thousand horse). Aurangzib appointed him Governor of Delhi. He seems also to have been Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and to have enjoyed his sovereign's confidence. Bernier calls him "the most learned man of Asia,....and one of the most powerful and distinguished . . . Lords of the Court." After devoting his mornings to his State duties, he used to set apart his afternoons to philosophical studies. In consideration of his studious habits and his work in the Foreign Department, he was exempted from the duty of appearing twice a day at the ceremony of saluting the king, which was compulsory for the other great noblemen of the Court. With the French philosopher he eagerly read the works of Gassendi and Descartes, French philosophers who were then dead but whose works were at the height of their fame. Gassendi had personally taught Bernier, who had tended him on his death-bed. Descartes was the author of the Discourse on Method,* which forms a landmark in the development of modern science and philosophy. Danishmand Khan also counted, among his favourite subjects of study, astronomy, geography, and anatomy. But his learning and his position in no way detracted from his loveable character. Bernier was much attached to him and always calls him affectionately "My Agha" (My Lord).

* Published, 1644.

There were other noblemen at Court who were interested in European learning. Fazl Khan, the Grand Chamberlain of the Royal Household, asked Bernier to teach him the leading languages of Europe, and insisted upon being supplied with a select number of the best European books before he gave him permission to leave the Mughal Empire. Bernier, on the other hand, lived in India more like a student than a traveller. For the five or six years he was in the Mughal Court his principal employment was to learn Persian, translate European works into that language (then the Court language in India) and discourse systematically with the best Pandits on Hindu learning, religion, customs, and institutions. He had kept up a regular supply of books from Europe, and he collected in India books that interested him. He had formed the design (which he could not carry out) of translating a History of Kashmir from Persian into French. The manuscript he had was an abridgment in Persian, compiled by order of the Emperor Jahangir, from Kalhana's famous Rajatarangini.*

In the spring of 1665 the Court paid a visit to Kashmir, attended by a grand retinue, in which Bernier travelled with Danishmand Khan. As Bernier's pay was three hundred rupees a month, he was expected to keep two good Turkoman horses, and he also took with him a powerful Persian camel

*This Sanskrit work has for the first time been adequately edited and translated in our own day by Sir Aurel Stein, one of the long line of eminent men who have held the post of Principal of the Oriental College, Lahore.

and driver, a groom for his horses, a cook, and a servant to go before his horse with a flagon of water in his hand, according to the custom of the country. It was slow and solemn marching, with a big camp, consisting of over three hundred thousand men,—practically a moving city. The distance between Delhi and Lahore is about three hundred miles, and was considered equivalent to fifteen days' journey. They took about two months in their leisurely march. The rivers were ordinarily unbridged, and were crossed on bridges of boats. The crossing often took several days. On the way there were large tracts of uncultivated land, covered with jungle. There were game preserves, and the huge royal party indulged in hunting as they went along. There was the chase of black buck with tame hunting *Chitahs*. There was the *Nilgai* hunt, in which a net was first spread round a wide extent of country, and then drawn closer into a smaller and smaller circle until the riders and men were able to enter and dispatch the quarry with arrows, short pikes, swords, and muskets. There was also the hunting of cranes with hawks.

But the most honourable as well as the most dangerous hunt was that of the lion. This was reserved for the king and the princes. Lions were still found and hunted in this part of the country. The first step was to tie up an ass as a bait near the spot to which the gamekeepers had traced the lion's retreat. When there was a kill by night, the lion usually sought out water to quench his thirst, and

retired again to sleep by day. After the bait had been taken several times and the lion had been definitely located, large nets were spread round the country and drawn closer and closer together, to narrow the circle. When the space was sufficiently manageable, the King appeared on an elephant protected in places with plates of iron, and attended by the Grand Master of the hunt, some noblemen mounted on elephants, and a great number of mace-bearers on horseback and of game-keepers on foot, armed with half-pikes. He immediately approached the net on the outside, and fired at the lion with a large musket. The wounded animal invariably made a spring at the elephant, but was arrested by the net. The king continued to fire until the lion was killed. As sport this sounds tame, and the chances at first sight seem to be all against the lion. In practice the lion often escaped over the net, as happened on the present occasion, and then the sport became most dangerous. When the lion was finally killed, he was accurately measured, and the details about his size, skin, teeth, and claws were carefully recorded in the royal archives.

The city of Lahore they found very hot even in March. The river Ravi frequently changed its bed, and was subject to inundations. The houses were lofty, but as the Court had not resided here for some time, many of them were in ruins. There were five or six considerable streets and two or three which exceeded two miles and a half in length. The king's palace (the Fort) was originally built on a bank of

the river, but the river had already shifted its course half a mile away, leaving the old bed still visible, as it is to-day. The Lahore palace was a high and noble edifice, but very inferior to the palaces at Delhi and Agra.

At Lahore they waited for the melting of the snows in the passes that gave access to Kashmir. They followed the Pir Panjal route by way of Bhimbar. They had to cut down their kit, and change their tents to smaller ones suitable for the hill country. The heat was intense until they reached the hills, and there were many casualties on the march. The retinue of the king and the nobles was also very much curtailed. And yet it was estimated that the number of porters employed at Bhimbar was fifteen thousand. A royal ordinance fixed their pay at twenty rupees for every 100 lbs. weight. The time or distance covered by this wage is not stated, but in any case it seems to have been on a very liberal scale, and we can understand the large number of volunteers who came of their own accord in order to earn money, in addition to those who were ordered up by authority.

As soon as they had climbed the Pir Panjal range, and begun the descent into the valley of Kashmir, there was a marvellous change in temperature and scenery. They were transported on a sudden from the torrid to the temperate zone. Bernier thought he was transferred from India to Europe. " I almost imagined myself," he says, " in the mountains of

Auvergne* in a forest of fir, oak, elm, and plane trees, and could not avoid feeling strongly the contrast between this scene and the burning fields of Hindustan, which I had just quitted and where nothing of the kind is seen." A little further on, the two sides of the hill presented a striking contrast. The south side, that looking towards India, was full of Indian and European plants mingled together. The side exposed to the north was crowded exclusively with the flora of Europe. There was a riot of vegetable life. Hundreds of old trees were decaying or dead, and plunging into abysses down which man never ventured, while young trees were shooting out of the ground, to supply the places of the generations that were passing away.

The noble waterfalls of Kashmir evoked their due meed of admiration from the traveller. This is how he describes the famous *Nur-i-Chasm* † waterfall. "The magnificent cascades between the rocks increase the beauty of the scene. There is one especially which I conceive has not its parallel. I observed it at a distance from the side of a high mountain. A torrent of water rolling impetuously through a long and gloomy channel, covered with trees, precipitates itself suddenly down a perpendicular rock of prodigious height, and the ear is stunned with the noise occasioned by the falling of these mighty waters. Jahangir erected on an adjacent rock, which was smoothed for the

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* A plateau in the south of central France in the Departments of Puy de Dôme and Cantal.

† Literally, "Light of the eyes."

purpose, a large building, from which the Court might leisurely contemplate this stupendous work of nature, which, as well as the trees before mentioned, bears marks of the highest antiquity, and is perhaps coeval with the creation of the world."

The green and well watered valley of Kashmir had the appearance of a fertile and highly cultivated garden. "Meadows and vineyards, fields of rice, wheat, hemp, saffron, and many sorts of vegetables, among which are intermingled trenches filled with water, rivulets, canals, and several small lakes, vary the enchanting scene. The whole ground is enamelled with our European flowers and plants, and covered with our apple, pear, plum, apricot, and walnut trees, all bearing fruit in great abundance. The private gardens are full of melons, water melons, water parsnips, red beet, radishes, most of our pot-herbs, and others with which we are unacquainted." The fruit, thought the traveller, was inferior, in quality and variety, to that of France. But this was due not to any inferiority in soil or climate, "but merely to the comparative ignorance of the gardeners, for they do not understand the culture and the grafting of trees as we do in France."

The capital (Srinagar) is described in picturesque terms. It was built on the banks of fresh-water lakes formed of live springs and streams. The river (Jhelum) ran through the town, and was connected with the lakes by means of a canal wide enough to admit boats. Two

wooden bridges spanned the river. The houses were of timber, well built, with two or three storeys. Most of them had pretty little gardens, and many of them had canals with pleasure boats, communicating with the lakes. The islands in the lakes were well laid out in delightful gardens, as were also the sides of the hills around, from which beautiful views could be obtained of the town, river, canals, lakes, islands and gardens. Then, as now, the Shalimar gardens, with their canals, fountains, summer-houses, poplar avenues, and carpets of emerald turf, made an unerring appeal to lovers of nature and art. The rivalry of Kashmiri and Mughal poets in their artificial exaggerations did not much impress the French philosopher. But he was free to confess that he was charmed with Kashmir, "the Paradise of the Indies." "In truth", he says, "the kingdom surpasses in beauty all that my warm imagination had anticipated. It is probably unequalled by any country of the same extent."

He admired also the people of Kashmir, their clear complexions and fine forms and the beauty of their women. The Kashmiris were noted for intelligence and wit, and in poetry and the sciences they were not inferior to the Persians. They were also active and industrious, and were excellent craftsmen. Their staple manufacture was shawls, which made the trade of the country, filled it with wealth, and gave employment even to little children. There were two kinds manufactured; one with the wool of the country,

finer and more delicate than that of Spain, and the other with the hair found on the breast of a wild goat from Tibet. The latter kind fetched the best prices ; a price of a hundred and fifty rupees was nothing out of the common. The shawls made with the native wool of Kashmir sold for about fifty rupees. Both kinds owed their delicate texture and softness, it was supposed, to certain properties in the water of the country.

After his visit to Kashmir Bernier seems to have parted company with the Mughal Court. In November 1665 he left Agra with the French jeweller Tavernier for Bengal. He found this province excelling Egypt in fertility. It produced rice in such abundance that it supplied not only neighbouring provinces but remote states. Sugar was another of its products much in demand, its exports going as far as Arabia and Persia. The Portuguese, who had many settlements on the delta of the Ganges and the adjacent coasts, had introduced special kinds of confectionery, in which there was a valuable trade. Cotton and silk textiles were also produced and exported in large quantities The cheapness of provisions struck Bernier, as it had struck Ibn Batuta. Twenty or more good fowls could be purchased for a single rupee, and fish was abundant. Many of the European adventurers, Portuguese, English, and Dutch, resorted to this Province and settled down there : there was a saying current among them that there were a hundred gates open for entrance, but not one for departure.

As a set-off against all these advantages, the climate was very unhealthy, and there was great mortality among the Europeans. In one of the ports Bernier saw two very fine English vessels which had been detained a year on account of the war with Holland, and were unable on the declaration of peace to put to sea, because the greater part of the crews had died. Alcohol was at the root of much of this disease. On this subject Bernier's remarks are valuable as coming from a physician, and he applies them to Upper India as well as to Bengal. "A wise man" he says "will here accustom himself to the pure and fine water, or to the excellent lemonade, which costs little and may be drunk without injury. To say the truth, few persons in these hot climates feel a strong desire for wine, and I have no doubt that the happy ignorance which prevails of many distempers is fairly ascribable to the general habits of sobriety among the people, and to the profuse perspiration to which they are perpetually subject. The gout, the stone, complaints in the kidneys, catarrhs, and quartan agues are nearly unknown, and persons who arrive in the country afflicted with any of these disorders, as was the case with me, soon experience a complete cure." But Bernier was too much of a philosopher not to see the other side of the picture. As he truly says: "although there is a greater enjoyment of health, yet there is less vigour among the people than in our colder climates and the feebleness and languor both of body and mind, consequent on excessive heat, may be considered a species of

unremitting malady, which attacks all persons indiscriminately, and among the rest Europeans not yet inured to the heat."

From Bengal Bernier passed on to Southern India, and early in 1667 he made his way to Surat, from which he took ship to Persia. Early in 1669 he returned to France, and in the following year he published his book and dedicated it to the French king. It passed through several editions. Soon after the publication of the first French edition, it was translated into English and Dutch, the respective languages of the two nations which were then contending for commercial supremacy in the East. He died in 1688, the year of the English Revolution.

The ground-work of the account of his travels is in the form of letters to distinguished people in France. Several of these letters were written in the course of his visit to Kashmir. One, describing the cities of Agra and Delhi, was written at Delhi. That on the administration, army, and finances of the Mughal Empire, was addressed to Colbert the French Minister of Finance, and was written after his return to France, as were also the two historical essays on the war of succession and on some of the political events that occurred during the years that Bernier spent in India. Bernier's view was that of a man looking from above in the company of the governing classes, and yet not in their confidence. We miss in him any intimate contact with the mind of the people or an

understanding of the real motives which swayed them. He is frankly an outsider, with a lofty tone of superiority. In his dedication to the French king he modestly excuses the imperfections of his style on the ground of his long residence in a foreign court which may have made his language " semi-barbarous. " The chief lesson that he derived from his visit to Hindustan was that he learnt there by contrast, for the first time, of " the happiness of France."

Among the bigger public questions with which he dealt was the right of private property in land. This was not recognised in India, where all land was supposed to be owned by the State, nor was there a hereditary nobility, with long family traditions behind it. Equally wanting was a prosperous middle class, to stand between abject poverty and lavish (if temporary) munificence. So strong was his feeling on the subject that he summed up all the misfortunes and imperfections of the east as due to this cause. He laid too much emphasis on the matter, but there is much in his words that requires consideration.

" Take away the right of private property in land, " he wrote, " and you introduce, as a sure and necessary consequence, tyranny, slavery, injustice, beggary, and barbarism; the ground will cease to be cultivated, and become a dreary wilderness; in a word, the road will be opened to the ruin of kings and the destruction of nations. It is the hope by which a man is animated, that he shall

retain the fruits of his industry, and transmit them to his descendants, that forms the main foundation of everything excellent and beneficial in this sublunary state, and if we take a review of the different kingdoms in the world, we shall find that they prosper or decline according as this principle is acknowledged or contemned: in a word, it is the prevalence or neglect of this principle which changes and diversifies the face of the earth."

The routine of the Mughal Court was frequently relieved by the reception of embassies. Those which Bernier saw came from such varied powers as the Usbek Khan of Turkestan, beyond the borders of Kabul province, the Dutch who had several factories in the Mughal dominions, the Sharif of Mecca, the King of Yemen, the Prince of Basra in Iraq, the King of Abyssinia, the Shah of Persia, and the King of Tibet. Each of these embassies brought appropriate presents from its own country and was given in return more costly presents by the Mughal Emperor. They were received with more or less distinction according to the show they made, and the estimation in which the accrediting authority was held in the Mughal Court. The King of Tibet was treated as a tributary, and a treaty was arranged with him, which included among its terms a provision that the coins of Tibet should bear on one side an acknowledgment of Aurangzib's suzerainty. Tibet was then on the trade route between India and China. The caravans started from Patna, passed through Lhassa, and penetrated to the Chinese frontier from the west.

Persia was a neighbouring and powerful kingdom, and its ambassadors were treated more or less on terms of equality in the Mughal Court. As Persian was the Court language in India, the Persians were at home with the Mughal, and many were the combats of wit that were exchanged, according to the common gossip in Delhi. Aurangzib himself observed strict decorum in diplomatic intercourse. But Bernier heard of many pleasantries exchanged by Shah Jahan with the Persian ambassador of his day. Shah Abbas was the Persian monarch then, and his ambassador scrupled not, in convivial gatherings, to repay Shah Jahan in his own coin. Shah Jahan once, in a fit of petulance, tried to snub the ambassador by asking : " Has then Shah Abbas no gentleman in his court that he sends me such a fool ?" " Oh yes ! " replied the Persian ambassador, " the court of my sovereign abounds with men far more polite and accomplished than I am, but he adapts the ambassador to the king ! "

Another instance of a quick repartee may be quoted. Shah Jahan had invited the Persian ambassador to dinner. The monarch was partial to the homely dish of Khichri, and was doing full justice to it, when he saw the Persian busy picking bones in his dish. Said the monarch sarcastically : " Elchi Ji ! (my lord ambassador), what shall the dogs eat ? " "Khichri ! " was the prompt and crushing reply !

In contrast with these frivolous witticisms picked up from the petty talk of the Court,

Bernier records a scathing speech on education addressed by Aurangzib to his old teacher. The Philosopher received the words from his "Agha" and vouches for their substantial accuracy. "Show me a well-educated youth," said Aurangzib, "and I will say that it is doubtful who has the stronger claim to his gratitude, his father or his tutor. You taught me that the whole of Feringistan[1] was no more than some inconsiderable island,.....whose monarchs resembled petty Rajas, and that the Potentates of Hindustan eclipsed the glory of all other kings;....and that Persia, Usbek[2], Kashgar, Tartary, and Cathay[3], Pegu, Siam, Chīn [4], and Mā-chīn [5], trembled at the name of the king of the Indies. Admirable geographer! deeply-read historian! Was it not incumbent upon my preceptor to make me acquainted with the distinguishing features of every nation of the earth: its resources and strength; its mode of warfare, its manners, religion, forms of government, and wherein its interests principally consist; and, by a regular course of historical reading, to render me familiar with the origin of States, their progress, and decline; the events, accidents, or errors owing to which such great changes and mighty revolutions have been effected? Far from having imparted to me a profound and comprehensive knowledge of the history of mankind, scarcely did I learn from you the names of my ancestors the renowned founders of this empire.

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1. Europe. 2. See p. 82 above.
3. North China. 4. South China.
5. Mongolia & Chinese Turkestan.

"You kept me in total ignorance of their lives, of the events which preceded, and the extraordinary talents that enabled them to achieve their extensive conquests. A familiarity with the language of surrounding nations may be indispensable in a king, but you would teach me to read and write Arabic; doubtless conceiving that you placed me under an everlasting obligation for sacrificing so large a portion of my time to the study of a language wherein no one can hope to become proficient without ten or twelve years of close application. Forgetting how many important subjects ought to be embraced in the education of a Prince, you acted as if it were chiefly necessary that he should possess great skill in grammar, and such knowledge as belongs to a doctor of law; and thus did you waste the precious hours of my youth in the dry, unprofitable, and never-ending task of learning words!"

The city of Delhi which Bernier saw was the same city which we now see within the walls, the city of Shah Jahan. He did not think much of the fortifications, nor of the size of the city, but the suburbs were extensive, and had good gardens and open spaces. The population of Delhi (he thought) was perhaps equal to that of Paris. The Fort contained the Palace, which commanded a view of the river. The sandy space between the river and the Palace was used for reviews of troops and for elephant fights. The works in the Fort

itself were by no means strong; in his opinion a battery of moderate force would soon level them with the ground. There were two principal streets running in a straight line, with brick houses and shops on either side, and five smaller streets not so long or straight. The rest were narrow alleys built without regard to symmetry. The poorer houses were built of mud and thatch, and fires were frequent, resulting in much loss of life. He considered Delhi a mere collection of many villages, or a military camp with only a few more conveniences than are usually found in such camps.

The better houses were fairly roomy, with court-yards, gardens, trees, fountains, open terraces, and underground cellars, to which the inmates retired for coolness from noon till four or five o'clock in the afternoon. Some had *Khas khanas*, or small pavilions made of *khas*, the fragrant root which is still used in the hot weather for *khas* screens (*tattis*). The floor of a rich man's house was usually covered with a cotton mattress four inches thick, to give a soft tread to the feet. Over the mattress was spread a fair white cloth in the summer, and a silk carpet in the winter. One or two mattresses were placed to mark the seats of honour, covered with embroidery in silk, gold, and silver. On this sat the host and any distinguished guests that came on a visit. They leaned their backs on large cushions of brocade, and other cushions were placed round the room for guests not quite so high up in the social scale. Five or six feet above the floor, the walls were full of niches, in

which were placed porcelain vases and flower-pots by way of ornaments. The ceiling was gilt and painted in arabesque, with no figures of men or animals.

The shops were not decked out in the showy way characteristic of Europe. Provisions wtere dear and not very good. A lover of good cheer, thought Bernier, was not likely to quit Paris to visit Delhi. Here, unless a man was of the highest rank, he must live miserably. The streets abounded in astrologers and fortune-tellers. The artisans were not without skill, but they were despised, treated with harshness, and paid insufficiently for their labour. Their occupations were hereditary, and no one aspired to rise from the condition of life in which he was born.

The two principal public buildings in Delhi apart from the Fort, were the Jāmi Mosque, which still stands, and the Begam Sarai, which was destroyed in the Mutiny. The mosque was situated on high ground. Its three great domes and its minarets were of white marble. The rest of the building was of a red stone, easy to work but liable to peel off in flakes from the effects of time. The king repaired to this mosque every Friday in public procession. The Sarai had been built by Shah Jahan's eldest daughter Jahan-Ara. It was in the form of a large courtyard with a series of rooms opening out of a handsome verandah. Rich foreign merchants came here to stay and store their goods. The gate was closed at night, and there was perfect security from thefts. Bernier wished that

a score of similar structures were erected in Paris for foreign merchants.

Agra was an older city than the Delhi of Shah Jahan, and had been more in favour as a royal residence before the days of Aurangzib. In essentials its character was the same as that of Delhi, but it was larger in extent, it had a larger number of the better class residences built of stone or brick, and its Sarais were finer and more numerous. But it was not so well designed as Delhi, and it was not defended by walls. Its environs, however, presented a greener aspect, from the multitude of trees and gardens. The Jesuits had a church and college in this city, and the Dutch a factory. The chief architectural monuments of Agra were Akbar's Tomb and the Taj Mahal. To the Frenchman, who looked upon the East as "semi-barbarous," it was an astounding experience to gaze on the faultless beauty of the Taj. In spite of himself he allows his words to assume a tone of enthusiasm unusual to him. "The edifice," he says, "has a magnificent appearance, and is conceived and executed effectually. Nothing offends the eye; on the contrary, it is delighted with every part, and never tired with looking. The last time I visited Taj Mahal's mausoleum, I was in the company of a French merchant, who, as well as myself, thought that this extraordinary fabric could not be sufficiently admired. I did not venture to express my opinion, fearing that my taste might have become corrupted by my long residence in the Indies and as my companion was

come recently from France, it was quite a relief to my mind to hear him say that he had seen nothing in Europe so bold and majestic."

We must now take leave of our third traveller. We are not concerned with his reconstruction of the history of the tragic war of succession between the sons of Shah Jahan. But his judgment on the things which he saw in our country are of value to us, whether they are complimentary or otherwise. He represents a new epoch in the history of India. His nation founded their first Indian settlement at Pondicherry a few years after he left India. They also tried more than once in the eighteenth century to contend for the prize of India, which they failed to win. But the limited style, the trained powers of observation, and the new outlook of the social and political sciences, which the French Philosopher brought to bear on his experience in India, furnish us, with a fresh starting point from which we can study the growth of our country.
